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Katherine Kersten

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The Limits of Tyranny

And Other Lessons from the Gulf

Adam Meyerson

Whatever his many failings in domestic policy, George Bush will now go down in history as one of America's great commanders-in-chief. There are many heroes in his decisive victory over Saddam Hussein: Ronald Reagan, whose military buildup made it possible; General Schwarzkopf, whose strategic brilliance kept allied casualties to a minimum; the American and British troops, who solidified their countries' "special relationship" and whose courage and efficiency will set the standard for military professionalism; and the designers of advanced weapons systems, whose pinpoint accuracy and near-perfect functioning destroyed the enemy's capacity to fight. But primary credit goes to President Bush, who prepared America and the free world for a war they did not initially want to fight, and gave the military the tools and the clear instructions it needed to get the job done.

When Saddam was poised to invade Kuwait, the administration did not give a strong enough signal that this aggression would not be tolerated. But after this initial mistake, the president soon recognized—earlier than the Congress, and earlier than most of America's allies—what the world now knows: that Saddam Hussein was the kind of man who simply had to be stopped before he became even more dangerous. And with a determination and sense of purpose out of character with his previous career, the president led the grand coalition he put together into a victory much swifter and more overwhelming than almost everybody predicted.

The Burdens of Vietnam and Hiroshima

The great event of our times is the collapse of the Soviet empire, and the demonstration that Communist and other totalitarian regimes are incapable of satisfying the economic and spiritual aspirations of their people. The rout of Saddam is another manifestation of the limits of tyranny, for it showed that the armies of a despot are no match for a free people that takes defense seriously. Saddam could force his troops into battle, he could motivate them temporarily with the loot of conquest, but a command system based primarily on fear could not sustain his soldiers' will to fight.

President Bush said correctly that the Gulf triumph has swept away the burden of Vietnam. The world now knows that the American people will support the use of force in strategically important regions, when the cause is just, when peaceful options have been exhausted, when the people Americans are helping appreciate their efforts, and when the U.S. military does its job efficiently, decisively, and humanely. The U.S. will not be the "world's policeman": most global trouble spots, after all, are less important strategically than the Middle East. But the world is now a safer place, because would-be aggressors may be deterred by the renewed respect that Americans have for the capabilities of their military and for the moral legitimacy of occasionally using force.

The Gulf war also lifts some of the burden of Hiroshima that has weighed so heavily on the Western psyche. The destructiveness of the atom bomb induced a tremendous sense of guilt among Western scientists who lost their moral self-confidence, and even began to question the search for knowledge itself. As a perverse consequence, many scientists, especially many nuclear physicists, almost religiously embraced the doctrine of mutual assured destruction, which purported to transform nuclear weapons into instruments of peace.

The precision bombing of Baghdad and the remarkable success of the Patriots now shows a better way to relieve science of its burden. Technology in the Gulf war served to minimize civilian casualties—and to destroy the very weapons of destruction it had created. After the Scud attacks, it will be unconscionable for anyone to oppose missile defenses—as many top scientists and arms controllers have done in the past. It will also be unconscionable to oppose the modernization of high-precision non-nuclear weapons that can defeat new Saddam Husseins without the specter of Armageddon. Perhaps this time the scientific community will be on board.

Three Religions of Abraham

The Hot War in the Gulf revealed that the Cold War is really over. The Soviet Union did not share the objectives of George Bush's coalition, and its diplomacy in the war's final weeks could have seriously damaged the effort

Adam Meyerson *is editor of* Policy Review.

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to neutralize Iraq as a threat to its neighbors. Even Germany and Japan proved much more reliable friends than the Kremlin. But if the Soviets were not a true friend, neither were they a real enemy. Although they did provide some weaponry and intelligence to Iraq, they apparently did not break the military embargo in a big way. They supported the U.S. in the key Security Council votes. And there was no fear, as there was in Vietnam and the Yom Kippur War of 1973, that the Soviets would intervene militarily if their client was too badly beaten.

The war in the Gulf was also an important advance for hopes that the three great religions of Abraham—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—will someday live together in peace in the Holy Land they share. Prospects for Arab-Israeli reconciliation have been damaged, of course, by the disgraceful embrace of Saddam Hussein by the Palestinian people, who will never achieve their aspirations for a state of their own until they can persuade Israel of their peaceful intentions. But the failure of Saddam's Scuds to do much damage may make Arabs realize that their dream of obliterating the Jewish state is not a realistic one. Also, for the first time ever, Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations have entered into tacit alliance with Israel—and done so without suffering internal political damage. President Bush's peace initiatives may possibly bear fruit if other Arab states and the Palestinian people will follow the Egyptian example and finally accept a Jewish presence in the Middle East.

The Democrats' Misjudgment

At home, the Gulf conflict showed that the end of the Cold War did not end important ideological and partisan differences over defense and foreign policy. National security is still an important trump card for conservatives and Republicans, who will continue to be trusted by voters to make better military decisions than liberals and Democrats.

The patriotism of liberals and Democrats must not be called into question here. Once the decision to go to war was taken, they wholeheartedly supported American troops in the Gulf—the first time they had unapologetically supported overseas military action since Korea and the early days of Vietnam. In contrast to their response to many Communist insurgencies, liberals and Democrats had no illusions about Saddam Hussein's good intentions, nor did they seek to appease him. On the contrary, Democratic leaders fully shared President Bush's insistence that Saddam withdraw from Kuwait.

Where congressional Democrats, with a few brave exceptions, showed they could not be entrusted with military leadership was in their misjudgment about what it would take to achieve that withdrawal. Their long-term embargo strategy was discredited by Saddam's refusal to withdraw even after nearly 40 days of punishing bombardment. Once diplomatic efforts failed, President Bush and the Republicans argued that only overwhelming force would do the job—a decision vindicated by history. Statesmanship is often a matter of judgment calls, and voters will remember that in the first post-Cold War crisis, congressional Democrats, with a few exceptions, judged wrong.

Civil Rights Betrayal

Another domestic loser from the Gulf war is the civil rights establishment, which demeaned the patriotism and heroism of black soldiers by implying they had signed up only because of an absence of other opportunities. The civil rights leaders envisioned only the body bags, and argued that it was unfair for a disproportionate number of blacks to be asked to risk their lives. What they failed to recognize were the disproportionate opportunities for glory and character development.

The veterans of Desert Storm, in sharp contrast to those of Vietnam, are returning home as national heroes, and the large number of blacks in the operation—from Chairman Powell and General Waller on down the ranks—therefore represents a milestone in American history. Never before have so many blacks been so admired for their patriotism, their professional competence, their courage under fire, and their strict discipline. They will be hot tickets on the civilian job market. But none of this is any thanks to a civil rights leadership that saw black soldiers only as victims instead of glorious victors. This is the second time in a generation that the civil rights establishment has betrayed the interests of black Americans—the first being its ostracism in the '60s and '70s of anyone who raised concerns about the breakup of the black family.

The Hot War in the Gulf revealed that the Cold War is really over.

Can-Do Government

A challenge for conservatives is that the sheer competence of American troops in the Gulf will revive faith in government. Liberals will argue that many of America's domestic problems could be solved if the financial resources of the Pentagon and the political willpower demonstrated during the war were applied to homelessness or education or economic productivity or health care. They will be mostly wrong, for three reasons: because the hierarchic command system of the military is economically inefficient outside of warfare as well as inappropriate for civilian life in a free society; because domestic issues already absorb federal, state, and local budgets five times greater than spending on the Pentagon; and because many of America's most serious problems, such as the destruction of the family, can only be cured by cultural regeneration rather than political means. But liberals will strike a sympathetic chord as they try to apply the can-do spirit of Desert Storm to domestic as well as foreign policy. Unless conservatives demonstrate a can-do political spirit of their own, they will lose much of the advantage gained from liberal misjudgments over national security in the Gulf.

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What Do Women Want?

A Conservative Feminist Manifesto

KATHERINE KERSTEN

Am I a feminist? Like many American women, I have been uncertain for years how to respond. This might seem odd, for as a professional woman, I owe an incalculable debt to those who battled to open the voting booths, the universities, and the boardrooms to women. I believe that men and women are one another's equals, and that both sexes must be free to develop their potential unhampered by preconceptions about their abilities. Moreover, I know from personal experience that in many of their endeavors women continue to face greater obstacles to their success than men do.

Yet despite these convictions, I find I have little in common with most of the women I know who call themselves feminists. Reduced to its essence, their feminism often seems a chip on the shoulder disguised as a philosophy; an excuse to blame others for personal failures; a misguided conviction that rage is the proper response to a society that—try as it might—can't seem to arrange things so that everyone "gets it all." I sometimes feel an outright antipathy to women's organizations that claim to have an inside track on my "interests" and "perspectives," and purport to speak for me in the public arena. These organizations seem ill-equipped to advance women's happiness, for all too often their leaders appear neither to understand nor to respect the majority of American women.

Debt to the West

What sets me apart from most contemporary feminists is that—more than anger at the injustices done to women in the past—I feel gratitude toward the social and political system that has made much-needed reform possible. I believe that American women will pay a heavy price if they allow feminists who do not feel such gratitude to lay claim to the moral authority of the feminist heritage, and to appropriate for themselves the right to set the feminist agenda.

Consequently, I propose an alternative to the feminism of the women's studies departments and "public interest" lobbies. I envision a self-consciously *conservative* feminism, inspired by what is best in our tradition, that can speak to women's concerns in both the private and public spheres. Such a feminism is based on three premises: first, that uniform standards of equality and justice must apply to both sexes; second, that women have historically suffered from injustice, and continue to do so today; and third, that the problems that confront women can best be addressed by building on—rather than repudiating—the ideals and institutions of Western culture.

The experiences of a lifetime—my studies, my brushes with sex discrimination and harassment, my work as a banker and attorney, and my career as a wife and mother—have convinced me that women need a philosophical framework that can help them make wise choices in their pursuit of happiness. I believe that a synthesis of conservative and feminist principles can most effectively sustain and inspire women in the post-Superwoman era.

Plato's Daughter

As a girl, I received conflicting messages about what to expect from life as a woman. My mother and grandmother were strong, self-reliant, adventurous women. By encouraging me to set the highest goals for myself they gave me a sense of unlimited possibilities.

Yet at a young age I found that certain roles in school—the prestigious position of sixth-grade crossing guard, for example—were closed to me simply because of my sex. I discovered that female teachers were frequently paid less than male teachers, and I puzzled over why my wise and gifted grandmother had been viewed as unfit to vote when she came of age in 1915. Did men's and women's physiological differences justify markedly different political, economic, and social status, I wondered. Should justice and equality mean different things for men and women?

I first had the opportunity to investigate these questions as an undergraduate at the University of Notre Dame, where I enrolled the first year women were admitted. At Notre Dame I embarked on a three-year study of the "Great Books," and began to acquire the tools necessary to think seriously about justice and the good

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life. My reading of Sophocles, Plato, Dante, Shakespeare, Galileo, Locke, Mill, Kant, and Tolstoy inspired me with a profound regard for the Western intellectual and cultural tradition, and for the slow march to constitutional democracy, which is its proudest accomplishment.

Of course, I read and relished female authors like Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf. But I did not find their writings more accessible or relevant than those of the great male thinkers with whom I was simultaneously becoming familiar. Likewise, while I enjoyed my female classmates and professors, I felt no greater affinity or ease of communication with them than I did with their far more numerous male counterparts. In fact, I viewed it as self-evident that human beings—whether philosophers or freshmen—should be judged on their merits as individuals, rather than pigeon-holed according to superficial external characteristics.

God and Woman at Yale

At Yale, however, where I earned a master's degree, I found that intellectual communion with women could hold a particular fascination. I discovered this at a party that the female students of one of Yale's residential colleges gave to honor the college's women fellows. Many of the all-female gatherings I had previously attended had been coffees or bridal showers, where the conversation had tended toward the prosaic. But, that day at Yale, I found myself surrounded by female biologists, political scientists, and linguists, all animatedly exchanging information about their disciplines. The experience was exhilarating, not because my companions voiced uniquely "female" perspectives, but because they embodied, in a way that made me proud, the array of accomplishments women can achieve when free to develop their talents.

As a member of the first generation of "liberated" women, I eagerly looked forward to climbing the career ladder after graduation. I expected a great deal from my career: intellectual challenge, excitement, and a sense of power and accomplishment. The reality was very different. I worked first at a large Chicago bank, and subsequently at a Big Ten university. In both positions I was disillusioned, not by unfair treatment, but by duties that quickly came to seem routine and uninteresting. Now I had money and status, but I couldn't shake the nagging suspicion that I was somehow missing the really important business of my life. As time passed, I began to yearn for a husband and a family. But I found that I couldn't talk about marriage and children with people of either sex, and expect to continue being taken seriously as a professional.

Pride and Prejudice

While I generally felt myself the equal of male counterparts both as a student and a working woman, I did encounter special hardships because of my sex on several occasions. During my university years, for example, a professor whom I was consulting about a paper locked me in his office and bluntly proposed a visit to his bedroom. When I refused in bewilderment he suggested that I was frigid, and warned that if I repressed my desires now, I would find myself walking the streets later in life. This professor had a good deal of influence over my academic career; fortunately, he did not choose to penalize me because I rejected his advances.

Even more traumatic was an incident that occurred after I left my second job to enroll in law school. Following my freshman year, I obtained a summer clerkship at a large law firm. My first day at the firm, the attorney assigned as my mentor warned me to avoid working with one partner, who didn't like women who were taller than he was. If I had to have dealings with this man, my mentor suggested, I should sit down whenever I was in his presence.

I received excellent reviews at the firm, although I did have to work for the partner about whom I had been warned. At the end of the summer my mentor assured me that I would be a shoo-in for the position of full-time associate. Shortly thereafter, however, I received a call from the firm's hiring partner informing me that I would not be offered a permanent position after all. My work had been more than satisfactory, the partner assured me confidentially. Unfortunately, some of the other partners had found me too self-assured and intimidating. I was devastated by my rejection and briefly considered legal action, but the prospect seemed too time-consuming and exhausting. Determined not to allow this misfortune to destroy my happiness, I searched until I found a job at another firm, where "self-assured" women were regarded as an asset.

Conservatism can too easily fall into a reflexive defense of the status quo. Feminism provides a counterweight, asserting that when justice and equality are at issue, we must seek reform boldly as well as prudently.

My curiosity about feminism, which began at Yale, grew during my years as a working woman. After the discouraging outcome of my summer clerkship, I decided to attend a feminist conference billed as "Womanspirit." Although I had hoped to gain insight and camaraderie, I was sadly disappointed. The mood at the conference was strikingly anti-intellectual, and I was forced to choose among a plethora of workshops on topics such as "listening to your inner voice" and "dealing with your anger." Our inescapable biological "sisterhood" was urged on participants as the most important fact of our lives, and the day ended with an angry poem by a woman who exhorted us to "set bonfires of used tampons" in front of various bastions of male power.

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Bob Stockfield

The conservative feminist seeks to ensure that women everywhere have the opportunity to develop their talents, to seek adventure, and to ask and answer the great questions.

As law school came to an end, I felt well on my way to fulfillment in both my personal and professional lives. I had met the man who became my husband during my second year, and after graduation we enthusiastically prepared to juggle family and career responsibilities. When I gave birth to our first child, we found a home day-care provider, and I returned to work feeling confident that our son would lose nothing significant by being cared for primarily by her, rather than by me.

I soon learned otherwise. My husband and I discovered, quite by accident, that our provider had a full-time night job; that she often confined the children to their cribs while she slept during the day; and that she allowed them to play unsupervised while she did chores outside her apartment. Despite a frantic search, I had little success in locating other home providers who satisfied me. The institutional day-care centers I toured left me heartsick as I contemplated rows of antiseptic cribs and lackadaisical staff. With another child due in a month, and with more than mixed emotions, I left the law firm to become a full-time mother.

A Mother's Work

I have found caring for my children—we had four in five years—to be the most challenging and rewarding job I have ever tackled. Yet I have also felt the sense of frustration and isolation that frequently besets a full-time parent. It was very difficult to give up my professional identity, and to convince myself that I was an equal partner in the family although I was no longer contributing financially. The day that I made up my mind to quit my job, a woman taking a survey came to the door. When she asked for my occupation, I wavered: this is the real test, I thought. I couldn't get the word "homemaker" out, so I crumbled. "I'm an attorney," I blurted.

Today, I feel that I have reached a hard-won balance in my life, one achieved by trial and error, by fits and starts. My greatest satisfaction comes from rearing my children, a vocation that seems to me vastly underrated, both in terms of its intellectual challenge and the comprehensive nature of its demands.

I continue to be amazed by the patience, the imagination, the empathy, the ability to teach and inspire, and the finely tuned moral sense that are required to shape the character of young and vulnerable human beings. I work hard every day to inculcate in my children the values and the sense of community that gave my life meaning as a child, and I am convinced that—although providers of good home-based day-care can be found—very few of these, and certainly no day-care center, can begin to duplicate the love, attention, and moral guidance that a parent can give.

Limitless Horizons

A source of satisfaction almost as significant as that I derive from my children is the role in public life that my status as a full-time parent has made possible. Paradoxically, today I participate in a far broader range of activities than I did when I was a single professional woman leading an unencumbered, "fully liberated" existence. In those years, my life was largely given over to self-centered efforts to earn a living, to entertain myself, to establish friendships, and to find a mate. Indeed, only with the birth of my children did I become aware of the vital importance of serving, and preserving, the community that they will inherit.

I know that if my husband and I were both working as lawyers during the day and struggling to maintain a home at night, we would have time for very little else. As it is, our assumption of different but overlapping roles has enabled me to become deeply involved in a variety of important and challenging projects. I have immersed myself in educational concerns, doing everything from reading at my children's school, to sitting on curriculum committees, to attempting to influence educational trends at the state and national level. I have devoted significant effort to public policy matters: writing, speaking, debating, and organizing community groups concerned with both domestic and foreign policy issues. I have read thought-provoking books, canvassed for the March of Dimes, carted the children to concerts and swimming lessons, written editorials for the local paper, and generally enjoyed a more stimulating and fulfilling existence than at any other time in my life.

I haven't "got it all" today, and I know I never will. I may never become the president of my state bar association, or a highly paid partner in a law firm. Yet I am happy and look forward to the future. I have come to terms with the trade-offs I have made, and accept the fact that human desires—by nature limitless—can never be fully satisfied in an imperfect world. No one gets it all, I see now, yet many find happiness.

The conservative tradition incorporates a view of human nature, and of justice and equality, that offers a useful starting point to women who seek fulfillment in a world of limitation. The tradition of classical feminism takes a step beyond, and teaches women that their horizons should be as limitless as men's.

Feminism's Founding Principles

At the root of the American Founding is the notion of a universal human nature, which renders people everywhere more similar than different. This common

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humanity confers on all human beings certain natural and inalienable rights. In addition, it enables people of markedly different times and places to speak intelligibly to one another about questions of justice and virtue, of good and evil, and to enrich one another's understanding, despite the intervention of thousands of miles or thousands of years.

Yet, human nature, so noble in certain ways, is limited in its potential, as thinkers from James Madison to Thomas Sowell have reminded us. It is limited by passion and self-interest, by its finite capacity to gather and process information, and by its inability to realize its loftiest goals without provoking a host of unintended consequences. As a result of these limitations, and of human contingency on a natural world characterized by disease, disasters, and scarce resources, suffering and inequity are endemic to the human condition.

Perfect justice and equality, then, are beyond the grasp of any human society, present or future. However, justice and equality as *moral principles* must always animate the norms, institutions, and policies of a society that aspires to be good. As the political philosopher Charles Kesler has pointed out, conservatives differ from ideologues of both the Left and Right in according *prudence* a central role in determining how these principles can best be secured and honored in practice.

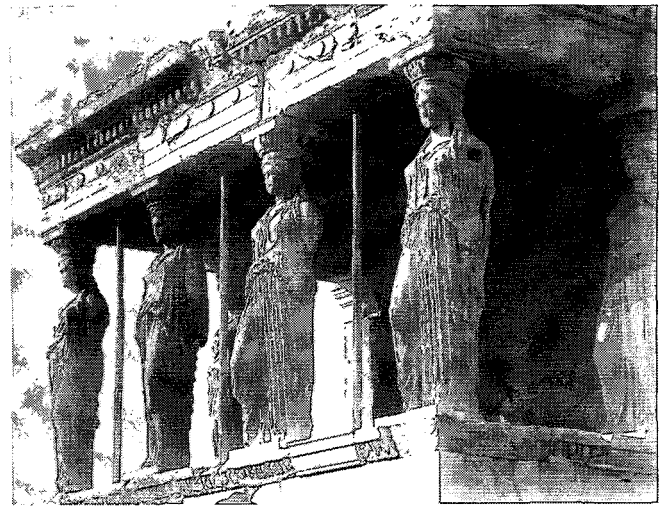
As Western, and specifically conservative, ideas about justice and equality have developed, a corollary line of thought has emerged. This is the tradition of classical feminism, which draws it inspiration from the Western belief in a universal human nature conferring inalienable rights on all who share it. Classical feminism holds that, because men and women participate equally in this nature, the application of uniform standards of justice and equality to both sexes is morally imperative.

"Every Path Laid Open"

Contemporary Americans tend to forget the formidable obstacles that met classical feminism's early efforts at reform, and the cost at which its victories—taken for granted today—were won. For the Western tradition, although more beneficent to women than other major cultural traditions, has historically severely restricted the social, intellectual, and political roles open to females. As recently as the 19th century, American women were generally not allowed to hold title to property, establish businesses, serve on juries or testify in court, or challenge their husband's authority.

Of course, throughout history there have been many natural barriers to women's advance. Until the advent of the Industrial Revolution and democratic capitalism, men and women everywhere lived harsh, constricted lives of physical drudgery. Women's opportunities have been further limited by the all-consuming nature of their reproductive roles, over which, until recently, they have had little control.

Nevertheless, for centuries a host of artificial barriers—legal, religious, and educational—have added to women's inability to realize their human potential in ways that have been open to their male counterparts. In the West and elsewhere such artificial restrictions have often been justified by the argument that the "female nature" renders women emotional, unreliable, illogical, and limited in their interests and abilities.



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The problems that confront women can best be addressed by building on—rather than repudiating—the ideals and institutions of Western culture.

The mission of classical feminism has been to expose and discredit the notion that, for women, biology is destiny. Classical feminist thinkers have generally acknowledged that men and women differ in a number of ways, and that these differences, in addition to being a source of pleasure, have proved well adapted to promoting the survival of our species. But classical feminists have insisted that biological differences are irrelevant in most spheres of life. The feminist Margaret Fuller expressed this eloquently when she wrote in 1844, "What Woman needs...is as a nature to grow, as an intellect to discern, as a soul to live freely....We would have every path laid open to Woman as well as to Man."

Excesses of Contemporary Feminism

Classical feminism embodies, in Cynthia Ozick's words, a vision of "aspiration and justice made universal, of mankind widened to humankind." Yet today many feminist leaders repudiate the concept of a universal human nature. In fact, as the philosopher Christina Sommers has observed, most contemporary feminist intellectuals regard human nature as "a myth invented by men to oppress women."

Contemporary feminists have little choice but to reject the concept of human nature, for it poses a fatal threat to the utopian yearnings at the heart of *their* feminist vision. Although this vision takes different forms, it tends to rely on two premises: first, that men's oppression of women is the governing principle of human social life, and second, that patriarchal social institutions are all that stand between women and a truly just and egalitarian world.

Feminists who repudiate the traditional notion of human nature have tried to replace it with one of two mutually inconsistent concepts, and have thereby plunged feminism into the intellectual schizophrenia that plagues it today. One camp—the "female chauvinists"—insists that men and women have radically *different* natures, which derive from their gender. These

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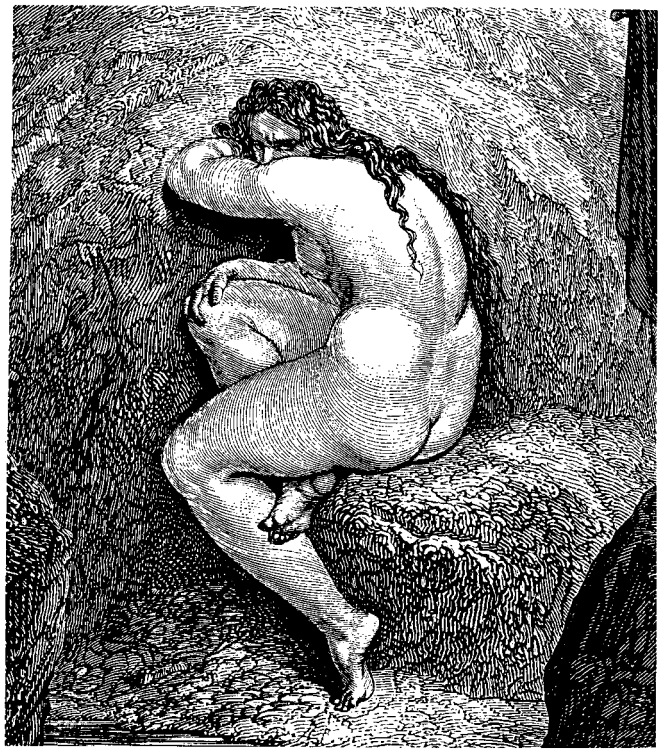

By giving rise to expectations that can never be met, contemporary feminism condemns women to despair, and consigns them to permanent "victimhood."

feminists tend to believe that men are naturally analytical, "logocentric," and obsessed with power and domination, while women are naturally intuitive, concrete, peaceful, and "life-affirming." Female chauvinists, of course, regard the female nature as superior to the male. They believe that because the two sexes lack a common nature, they have fundamentally different ways of experiencing the world, and find it difficult—if not impossible—to understand each others' perspectives.

On the other hand, feminists of the "unisex" school insist that men and women are essentially *identical.* This does not mean that they share a common nature; rather, it means that they have no discernible nature at all, but are infinitely plastic and malleable beings. Unisex feminists tend to attribute all differences in male and female behavior, preferences, and social roles to discrimination on the part of patriarchal males, or false consciousness on the part of hoodwinked women. Insisting like political scientist Richard Rorty that "socialization goes all the way down," these feminists maintain that—although men are oppressors now—re-education can eventually induce both sexes to want the same things and act in the same ways.

Cultivating Rage and Self-Pity

By rejecting human nature, contemporary feminists rid themselves of the bothersome notion that human beings are inherently flawed, and thus incapable of creating a truly just and egalitarian society. Once human shortcomings are removed from the equation, unjust social institutions appear primarily responsible for the failure of a wholly just society to evolve. In fact, many feminist intellectuals advocate completely restructuring the central institutions of our daily life. They believe that these institutions were created by men to oppress and exploit women and other victim groups, such as "people of color."

The social institutions that bear the brunt of feminist wrath are those of Western culture. That culture, in the eyes of many feminists, is the hopelessly tainted product of dead, white, heterosexual males, and as such, is the chief engine of sexism in the world today. Feminist attacks on Western culture range from attempts to shift the university's traditional focus from "white men's studies"—said to hold little relevance or interest for women—to efforts to replace the nuclear family and heterosexual marriage as the cornerstones of social organization. Ironically, feminists tend to forget that the West, and the West alone, has evolved the standards of justice, equality, and individual autonomy by which they now measure their society, and claim to find it utterly wanting.

Clearly, there is little place for the virtue of prudence in the worldview of many intellectual feminists. To them, justice and equality appear to be a sham as universal moral principles unless they constitute universal practices as well. Women must cultivate rage and self-pity, these feminists claim, in order to reach a liberating and "empowering" awareness of the true extent of their own degradation. Armed with this knowledge, they can begin to shed the burdens that the patriarchy imposes on them.

To the extent that contemporary feminism abandons its true mission to focus on oppression and self-absorption, it creates social ills more destructive than those it seeks to remedy. By giving rise to expectations that can never be met, it condemns women to despair, and consigns them to permanent "victimhood." Feminism of this sort clouds women's judgment. It renders them incapable of distinguishing between needs and wants, between real injustices and garden-variety irritations. It deludes them into believing that they possess new and profound knowledge because—unlike their less enlightened sisters—they now see cause for anger in the most trivial incidents of everyday life. Saddest of all, such

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a feminism cheats women of the happiness that is within their grasp by obscuring its true sources.

American women need conservatism, with its sense of the fundamental limitations of human nature and the value of the Western tradition, to temper the serious excesses that threaten contemporary feminism. But they need feminism, in its classical form, to elicit the best from conservatism. For because it starts from the premise that the world is imperfect, conservatism runs the risk of mistakenly concluding that we cannot, or need not, strive to make the world a more just place.

Conservatism, when it wavers in its active commitment to the ideas of justice and equality, too easily falls into a reflexive defense of the status quo, and a cramped and self-serving understanding of the dictates of prudence. Feminism provides a counterweight, asserting that when justice and equality are at issue, we must seek reform boldly as well as prudently. In the public sphere, conservative feminism aims to help women judge *when* change—and *which* change—is desirable, and to recognize the circumstances under which change is likely to produce unintended consequences that make matters worse, rather than better. On a personal level, conservative feminism aims to help women make choices that will render their own lives more productive and fulfilling.

Our Duties, Our Selves

Conservative feminism holds that there are two essential components of happiness for both women and men. Human beings find happiness in fulfilling obligations to family, fellow citizens, and the larger human enterprise we call civilization. But they also have a deep-seated need to expand their personal horizons by turning their energies in whatever direction interest, talent, and thirst for adventure may lead.

Unlike many contemporary feminists, the conservative feminist does not conceive of obligations to others as burdens, but as *duties*, the performance of which renders one a moral being. Her focus on duties does not mean that she is a dupe or a slave, or that she denies her own needs and interests to please others, as women have been forced to do in the past. On the contrary, the conservative feminist knows that it is impossible to forge an identity for herself outside a social context. She understands that it is the web of connections with others that produces a sense of purpose and an arena for moral action, by creating a meaningful role in an enterprise larger than her own finite existence.

In her personal life, the conservative feminist is guided by the precept that human beings must always be treated as ends, and not as means. She views sex as fulfilling when it is accompanied by mutual love and devotion. Consequently, her ideal is life-long commitment to one man in a marriage of equals, and she views her promise of fidelity to her spouse as liberating rather than confining. In this connection, she finds inspiring G. K. Chesterton's dictum that "the liberty for which one should chiefly care is the liberty to bind oneself."

If the conservative feminist becomes a mother, she accepts the need to make a host of sacrifices—personal, professional, and financial—for her children's sake. She expects her spouse to sacrifice as well, and decides

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Unlike Simone de Beauvoir, the conservative feminist views the special bond of motherhood not as evidence of oppression, but as cause for thanksgiving.

together with him how each can best contribute to the family welfare. She believes that family roles are flexible: men can become primary caregivers, for example, while women can pursue full-time careers. But as she and her spouse make their choices about family responsibilities, they take one thing as a given: their primary duty is to ensure their children's physical and emotional well-being, to promote their intellectual development, and to shape their moral characters.

The conservative feminist sees the greatly expanded role of fatherhood as one of the most valuable legacies of classical feminism. But she is not surprised that women choose to become primary caregivers for their children more often than men do. She senses that many women *prefer* to spend time at home with their children, especially when the children are very young. She is joined in this view by as prominent a feminist as Simone de Beauvoir, who opposed allowing women to stay home and raise their children because "if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one." Unlike Beauvoir, however, the conservative feminist views the special bond of motherhood not as evidence of oppression, but as cause for thanksgiving.

Virtuous Manhood

The conservative feminist believes that women should be strong, wise, and self-reliant, and she teaches her daughters accordingly. But she views these qualities as equally important for men, and she fears that many men have reacted to women's expanded role in society by retreating into irresponsibility and hedonism. In her

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eyes, men who are marginalized and encouraged to behave selfishly pose an extraordinary danger to society, while men who are dedicated to the larger good constitute an invaluable public resource. For this reason, and because she wishes her children to become the best that they can be, she sets an ideal of manliness before her sons.

The conservative feminist's ideal of manliness has little in common with the mindless "machismo" that permeates the popular culture today. She has no time for Rambo and his cold-hearted, cynical, swaggering compatriots. Rather, she teaches her sons that while strength is good, the strong have a special responsibility to assist and protect the weak and less fortunate. She explains the importance of behaving with honor under all circumstances, achieving self-mastery, and cultivating restraint.

Playing fast and loose with the concept of sexual harassment institutionalizes the view of woman as a helpless creature unable to hold her own.

The conservative feminist does not wish her sons to grow up believing that, by virtue of being male, they are guilty of the oppression of women. Nor does she wish them to affect to be more "caring" than the next man in a demeaning effort to impress women who condemn them for the fact of their manhood. True manhood, she counsels them, means accepting responsibility for others, and making their welfare a primary focus of life. It means developing a capacity for judgment, courage, honesty, generosity, determination, public-spiritedness, and self-denial in pursuit of a larger good.

The conservative feminist knows that her sons are not likely to find heroes who exemplify these qualities on *Miami Vice*. So she takes care to acquaint them with the great figures of literature and history who have traditionally served as models for character formation. Literary heroes like King David, Aeneas, King Arthur, Roland, Shakespeare's Henry V, Ivanhoe, and Robert Louis Stevenson's protagonists, along with historical figures like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Winston Churchill, and the heroes of John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage* embody a much-needed ideal of virtuous manhood for young men who might otherwise have to make do with Dirty Harry.

Duties to Community and Tradition

The conservative feminist knows that her own good, and that of her family, are inextricably bound up with the good of the larger community. She believes she has a duty to promote the public welfare by strengthening the institutions that promote communal values, and by shaping her community's vision of justice and equality.

The conservative feminist strives to make time for voluntary organizations such as the church or synagogue, the PTA, and the service clubs, which provide her community's social glue and enhance its quality of life. If work-related constraints prevent her from contributing directly to community-building, she makes a special effort to acknowledge and support those who do give generously of their time. In her view, men and women who labor voluntarily to promote the common good deserve at least as much respect as men and women who are paid for their exertions.

Moreover, the conservative feminist seeks to develop a prudential understanding of the ways in which justice and equality, as moral principles, can best be realized in her own society. For guidance, she looks to the Western cultural tradition, with its legacy of democratic institutions and civil rights. Like the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, she views the Western tradition as "an historically extended, socially embodied *argument*" about good and evil, and about the nature of the good life. She believes that before she can contribute to this argument, she must study the great ideas and social forces that have shaped the Western heritage. By learning from the lessons of history, she hopes to develop a capacity for judgment that will clarify, as MacIntyre would say, "the future possibilities which the Western past has made available to the Western present."

In Pursuit of Happiness

For centuries women have carried out duties toward family and community, and have found satisfaction in doing so. Yet there is more to the pursuit of happiness than the performance of duties. Women's historical exclusion from whole fields of human endeavor has greatly restricted the dimensions of life in which they have been able to seek and find personal fulfillment. Until recently, women could not educate themselves broadly, express themselves politically or artistically, live independent of the authority of father or husband, or pursue most vocations with a locus outside the home.

The conservative feminist rejoices in the achievements of her era's most accomplished women: Jackie Joyner-Kersee; Barbara Tuchman; Sally Ride; Leontyne Price; Margaret Thatcher; Nobel prize-winning scientist Barbara McClintock; novelist and scholar Margaret Drabble. She seeks to ensure that women everywhere have the opportunity to participate in *all* aspects of the human enterprise: to develop their talents, to follow their interests to their natural conclusion, to seek adventure, to ask and answer the great questions, and to select from a multitude of social roles.

Equal Rights, Comparable Wrongs

Like other feminists, the conservative feminist sees the promotion of justice and equality as a primary goal of public policy. Yet she understands these principles quite differently than do most contemporary feminists. Specifically, the conservative feminist tends to see *individuals* as having rights to justice and equality, while other feminists tend to see *groups* as having such rights.

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The conservative feminist understands justice in universal terms: she believes that its essence is fair treatment for *all* citizens. Justice requires that women have equal access to employment, education, housing, and credit, and—thanks to the civil rights legislation of the '60s and '70s—their rights to these things are now secure. But the conservative feminist believes that it is manifestly unjust to pass laws that create a privileged status for women, or that attempt to remedy past wrongs done to women by imposing wrongs or disadvantages upon men.

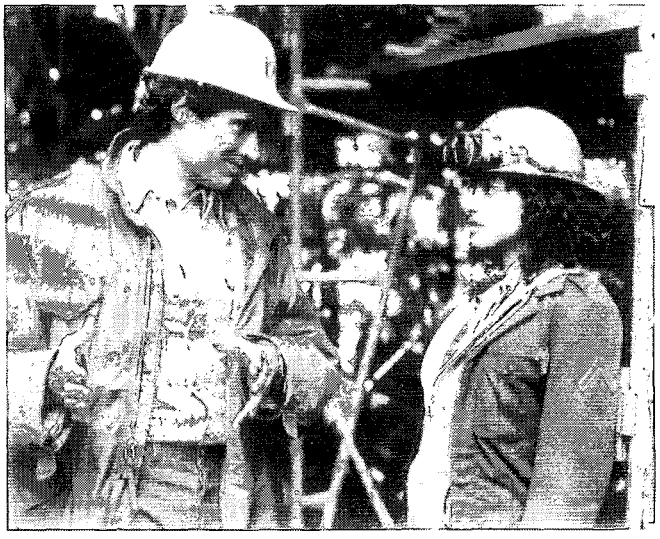
Road to Tyranny

The conservative feminist understands equality in universal terms as well. So long as men and women are governed by the same rules and judged by the same standards, she is satisfied that gender equality exists. Unlike most contemporary feminists, she does not leap to the conclusion that equality demands that the results of every social process be identical for men and women, viewed collectively. Indeed, she believes that attempts to enforce particular group results—for example, to require that a certain percentage of government contractors or college faculty be female—inevitably place great restraints on individual freedom of action. Moreover, like Friedrich von Hayek, the conservative feminist maintains that efforts to equalize *economic* results generally produce greater, and more dangerous, inequalities of *political* power among contending groups. She suspects, as Hayek did, that the goal of combining individual freedom and equality of group outcome is unattainable, and represents a hazardous first step on the road to tyranny.

In short, while most contemporary feminists advocate policies that maximize equivalence of condition among groups, the conservative feminist advocates policies that maximize individual freedom: the freedom of each citizen, male or female, to strive—and be rewarded—for personal excellence. Her commitment to individual freedom determines her stance on many of the public policy issues dear to contemporary feminists' hearts, among them affirmative action, comparable worth, and sex discrimination and harassment.

While most feminists advocate group equality, the conservative feminist works to maximize the freedom of each citizen to strive—and be rewarded—for personal excellence.

Not surprisingly, the conservative feminist opposes affirmative action and group quotas as a vehicle for remedying past discrimination and imposing equality of condition. She endorses "special help" programs, like those that prepare women for traditionally male vocations such as engineering and the hard sciences. However, she insists that jobs and positions themselves be awarded solely on the basis of merit. She has little time for those who seek to whitewash quotas with appeals to "inclusiveness" or "diversity." While true diversity—diversity of interest, temperament, expertise, political orientation, and social background—may often be an asset, the conservative feminist sees little value in mere diversity of gender.



Photofest

The conservative feminist does not lose sleep because female child-care workers outnumber female construction workers, so long as women are free to choose whatever occupation attracts them.

The Liberating Market

The conservative feminist believes that women are far better off under our current market-based pay system than they would be under a system based on the notion of "comparable worth." In our current system, wages fluctuate according to the market forces of supply and demand. But in a comparable-worth system, wages are set by bureaucracies that attempt to draw parallels between traditionally male and traditionally female occupations, in order to ensure that the wages paid for each are generally equivalent.

From the conservative feminist's perspective, to abandon the market's advantages and move toward a planned economy would be a serious mistake for women. Indeed, the conservative feminist knows that capitalism and the market, with their dynamism, flexibility, and appetite for innovation, are among the most powerful tools that women have in their quest for autonomy and prosperity. Capitalism, after all, got women off the farm and out of the house. It produced the typewriters and textile mills that made women's services essential for economic growth. By creating a veritable explosion of new technologies and opportunities, the capitalist system launched women's first tentative steps toward social equality and economic independence.

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Photofest

Women's mobility and sense of security are constrained more than men's by high crime rates.

As historically marginalized Americans like Jews and Asians can attest, capitalism's "creative destruction" is one of history's greatest levellers. By rewarding "whatever works," rather than "the way it's always been done," capitalism slowly undermines ancient prejudices and restrictive stereotypes. Third World women deprived of the market's benefits have found little means of escaping the rigid roles that have constrained them for millennia. And while the planned economies of the Eastern bloc were born, like comparable worth, of egalitarian motives, they have failed to bring genuine equality or prosperity to anyone, least of all women.

Folly of Class-Action Suits

The conservative feminist believes that women who have experienced sex discrimination—who have been deprived of certain responsibilities at work, for example, or passed over for promotion—should have access to the courts to achieve justice. But she is highly skeptical of class-action lawsuits that base claims of discrimination solely on statistical disparities in the numbers of men and women who hold certain jobs or earn certain incomes.

Class-action discrimination suits trouble the conservative feminist because she distrusts the premises that underlie them. These suits assume that gender "parity"—equivalent representation of the sexes in all occupations and income brackets—is a fundamental element of social justice. They assume, moreover, that statistical differences in men's and women's jobs and incomes can have only one cause: employer discrimination. And they assume that the men and women of the work force are, in a sense, interchangeable automatons, rather than individual decision-makers whose vocational choices reflect attempts to maximize their own happiness.

The conservative feminist knows that workplace "disparities" generally have complex explanations. Often they result, not from discrimination, but from the choices that men's and women's personal preferences lead them to make. For example, many women choose to sacrifice income, delay career advancement, or work part-time so that they can spend more time with their families. This does not cause the conservative feminist to lose sleep, nor does she toss and turn at night because female child-care workers outnumber female construction workers or truck drivers. Her cardinal rule is that women must be free to choose whatever occupation attracts them; but she does not insist that their choices conform to a statistical notion of "parity."

Callous Insensitivity

The conservative feminist believes that women who encounter sexual harassment, in the form of persistent and unwelcome sexual advances on the job, should have legal remedies. But she strongly condemns the current movement—particularly widespread on college campuses—to expand the definition of sexual harassment as part of a campaign to impose "politically correct" thinking. On many campuses, remarks that a woman might conceivably interpret as "offensive," "hostile," or even merely "insensitive" to her sex are now prohibited and punished. For example, at the University of Minnesota, where I attended law school, the policy manual on harassment forbids "callous insensitivity to the experience of women," and warns that "sexual harassment can be as blatant as rape or as subtle as a look." Not surprisingly, policies like this are increasingly invoked in circumstances that have no sexual overtones, but merely involve incidents that women find irritating or unpleasant.

Contemporary feminists' tendency to play fast and loose with the concept of sexual harassment disturbs the conservative feminist for a variety of reasons. It encourages women to relinquish responsibility for defending their ideas and actions, and exhorts them to blame every intellectual challenge, every disappointment, every awkward moment on male oppression or ill will. It institutionalizes the view of woman as perpetual victim, as a helpless, hapless creature unable to hold her own in the rough and tumble of social life without special legal armor to protect her feelings. It taints campus life with a pervasive atmosphere of group-based suspicion and hostility. And, ironically, it trivializes the suffering of women who encounter genuine sexual harassment.

The Conservative Feminist Agenda

The conservative feminist's political and social agenda differs markedly from that of most contemporary feminists. Not surprisingly, she believes that there are far more urgent threats to the average woman's well-being than the "glass ceiling," the predominantly male composition of fire departments, or the possibility that state legislatures, rather than the Supreme Court, may someday decide matters related to abortion.

Of most concern to the conservative feminist are contemporary social conditions that inflict disproportionate suffering and hardship on women, and threaten their ability to grasp new opportunities. Other feminists also lament these conditions, and some even take time

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out from raising funds for the National Abortion Rights Action League to say so. But the sad fact is that many feminists are prevented from effectively addressing fundamental threats to women's welfare by their hostility to the "bourgeois" values and social institutions that ordinary women find meaningful.

Four pressing issues top the conservative feminist's agenda:

Crime: Rape and violence against women are naturally a major concern of contemporary feminism. What most feminists overlook is the disproportionate impact of other sorts of crime on women.

Women's mobility and sense of security are clearly constrained more than men's by high crime rates. When I lived in Chicago, for example, I used to leave the Lyric Opera early, awkwardly edging my way out along rows filled with indignant couples. Cabdrivers seemed to prefer well-dressed men as customers, and I was afraid that unless I got a head start I would be left standing alone in the dark—a prime target for a purse-snatcher, or worse. Even today, when my husband is away from home, I check and recheck the locks on the doors and windows in a way he never does when I am gone for the weekend. It is not the fear of rape alone that leads women to do such things. It is the feeling that they are more vulnerable to aggression than men are, and that criminals often target those who are most vulnerable.

The prevalence of crime of all kinds should be a high-priority issue for contemporary feminists. Yet many feminists feel ambivalent about crime and criminals. Their tendency to see social institutions, rather than human limitations, as the root of all evil tempts them to view criminals as "victims" of society. Being victims themselves, they find it difficult to judge fellow victims, or to hold them personally responsible for their actions. In addition, contemporary feminists' allegiance to a quirky moral relativism, which identifies sexism and racism as the arch-sins of human history, makes it difficult for them to work up moral outrage at pedestrian offenses such as crimes against property.

Cultural degradation: The popular culture increasingly shapes Americans' moral and cultural horizons. Unfortunately, it routinely degrades and abuses women in ways that would have elicited universal cries of protest in less liberated days.

Of course, movies and television portray violence against men with numbing regularity. But, as Lorrie Moore observed recently in the *New York Times*, this tends to be the "violence of soldier against soldier, a chore performed usually with the quick firing of a gun." Violence against women, Moore notes, is "estheticized, playfully prolonged, eroticized." To illustrate, she points to the popular series *Twin Peaks*, which depicts "the killing and dismembering of women as a goofy kind of vandalism—as if the murder of a woman were the equivalent of trashing a Buick."

From the lyrics of bands like 2 Live Crew to the ravings of books like *American Psycho*, the theme of eroticized sadism directed against women has become a pervasive feature of American culture. Some feminist organizations have spoken out courageously against this trend. Yet many others have remained silent, at least in public. They seem paralyzed by fear of charges of "censorship." In addition, they seem loath to make common cause with political forces they find uncongenial, like "pro-family" Christians. Confused by conflicting loyalties, they abdicate leadership on an issue that should galvanize Americans across the political spectrum.

Sex and Destiny

Sex without commitment: A fundamental tenet of contemporary feminism is that women must become men's "sexual equals" if they expect to become their political and social equals. Sex, many feminists insist, is merely one component of a healthy, self-affirming lifestyle, and as such requires no serious commitment from either partner to be enjoyed. Feminists often explain traditional restraints on women's sexual freedom in one-dimensional terms, dismissing them as male attempts to wrest control of women's vital reproductive functions.

Obviously, women have benefitted significantly from their new-found sexual autonomy, and from society's recognition that women, like men, are sexual beings. Few would wish to return to the dark days of Hester Prynne or Tess of the D'Urbervilles. But feminists are wrong to assert that sex without commitment is no more dangerous for women than it is for men. We know now that sex of this sort has led to an epidemic of abortions, venereal disease, and female infertility; a host of unwanted children; and a sorry legacy of educations and careers—women's, not men's—cut short.

Feminists are wrong to assert that sex without commitment is no more dangerous for women than it is for men. It has led to an epidemic of abortions, venereal disease, and female infertility; and a sorry legacy of educations and careers—women's, not men's—cut short.

Those most vulnerable to the dangers of sex without commitment are young and disadvantaged women. They are least able to perceive and protect their own interests when "liberated" to sleep with men who seek only to exploit them. But self-possessed, well-educated women are also at risk. I am frequently amazed by the number of such women I know who fail to say no, or to take precautions, because they are afraid of angering a man.

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These women seem unable to formulate standards that would enable them to engage in sex on their own terms, rather than their partner's.

Recognizing and addressing the dark side of sexual liberation is difficult for many contemporary feminists. They tend, in knee-jerk fashion, to reject anything that smacks of the old "double standard." All too often, feminists have little to say to young women looking for what the journalist Stephanie Guttman has called "socially supported ways to say no." They call instead for free condoms, free clinics, and abortion on demand, or promote "date-rape sensitivity training" that encourages women to cede the responsibility for saying no to men. Measures like these will not help women who sense that sex can be more meaningful than first-run movies would suggest, but who haven't yet learned that love and commitment are the essential ingredients.

The Bettmann Archive

The conservative feminist believes that women should be strong, wise, and self-reliant, and she teaches her daughters accordingly. But she views these qualities as equally important for men.

The feminization of poverty: Illegitimacy and divorce—and the poverty they engender—blight the lives of American women and their children to an ever more appalling degree. One-quarter of American children are now born out of wedlock, and most endure lives of privation as a result. The sociologist Lenore Weitzman's finding regarding the economic effects of divorce has passed into American folklore: Divorced men experience an average 42 percent rise in their standard of living in the first year after the divorce, while divorced women and their children experience a 73 percent decline. Moreover, children whose fathers are absent from the home are far more likely than others to be plagued by drug use, violent behavior, and dismal educational performance. Mothers frequently fight the uphill battle against these risks alone.

Contemporary feminists deplore the feminization of poverty, but they tend to see the answer solely in terms of increasing government spending, rather than in terms of encouraging behavior that would stabilize and strengthen the traditional family. After all, to acknowledge that marriage is women's best defense against poverty and despair, or that two-parent families generally serve children better than one-parent families do, is to admit that women need men more than fish need bicycles. Yet despite many feminists' reluctance to face this fact, 25 years of failed government programs seem to prove unequivocally to most observers that Uncle Sam can't fill Dad's shoes.

Private Solutions

The conservative feminist maintains that women have largely won their battle for equality before the law. This does not mean that discrimination and harassment are likely to disappear soon. It does mean that women now have the tools they need to combat injustice of this sort, and that those who look to government for more comprehensive solutions risk creating other, more far-reaching problems. Reform is essential, however, in laws that affect family life. Divorce and child support legislation, in particular, must be altered if women and their children are to enjoy equal status with men.

But the conservative feminist is careful not to make the mistake of seeking exclusively political solutions to problems that are essentially social and cultural in nature. She believes that changing individual behavior is the key to reducing the ills that consign an increasing number of women to second-class citizenship. She knows, of course, that passing laws can be easy, while influencing behavior is notoriously difficult. Nevertheless, starting at home and in her immediate community, she attempts to do just that.

Addressing herself to young people, the conservative feminist seeks to define responsible behavior, and to articulate compelling arguments in its favor. She urges social institutions—schools, churches, and community

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leaders—to join in this effort, and to stress in all their activities that public welfare depends on private virtue. She believes that the environmental movement, which has had a powerful effect on the imaginations of young people, provides a useful model in this respect. For that movement shares many of the premises that the conservative feminist wishes to promote: that citizenship entails responsibilities, that the actions of every person affect the good of the whole, that it is better to do what is right than what is convenient, and that careless actions now may have unforeseen deleterious consequences down the road.

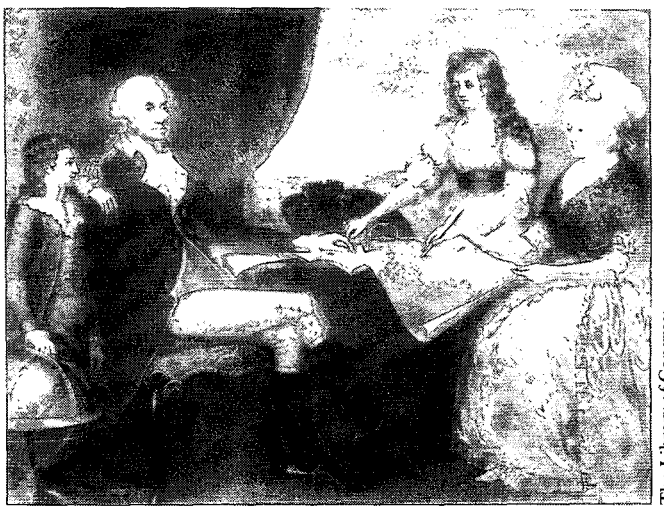
The conservative feminist also attempts to influence, or at least to blunt the harmful effects of, the popular culture. She strives to convince parents of the fact—well known to social philosophers from Plato to Jane Addams—that young people's imaginations and moral reflexes are shaped as much by the stories and images of the surrounding culture as by the formal lessons taught in school. Children who spend their after-school hours watching MTV rock stars demean scantily clad women are, in a sense, being *educated* about society's expectations regarding conduct toward women. The conservative feminist lets entertainment executives and advertisers know how she feels about their products, and she supports concerted action to convince them that such products don't pay.

The conservative feminist attempts to provoke public scrutiny of the consequences of feminist policies for the average American woman. She makes clear that feminist leaders do harm every time they deride the traditional family as the hung-up legacy of Ozzie and Harriet; demand the adoption of University of Beijing-style sexual harassment regulations; or burden the court system with yet another costly and ill-conceived class-action suit. Her objective is to persuade foundations and public bodies to rethink the resources they devote to the feminist establishment and to question the rhetoric and worldview on which it is based.

Although she seeks to break their near-monopoly in the public policy arena, the conservative feminist encourages feminist organizations to use their resources and political clout in ways that truly benefit the majority of women. If these organizations devoted themselves to reversing the popular culture's degradation of women, for example, they might well do real good. And, if public or student demand were loud enough, the women's studies programs now firmly in the grip of academic feminists might be compelled to expand their "oppression studies" curriculum to include useful investigations of "real world" gender-related issues, like the causes and consequences of divorce and the realities of balancing a family and career.

Architect of Her Own Happiness

As she carries out the tasks she has set for herself, the conservative feminist cultivates an intellectual outlook quite distinct from that of most contemporary feminists. The word "victim" does not trip easily off her tongue.



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Historical figures like George Washington embody a much-needed ideal of virtuous manhood for young men who might otherwise have to make do with Rambo.

She regards adversity as an inevitable component of human life, rather than an aberration afflicting primarily her and her sex. When hard times come, she strives to face them with courage, dignity, and good humor—qualities often in short supply in the feminist camp. And when her own shortcomings lead to failure, she resists the temptation to blame a hostile "system."

The conservative feminist is the architect of her own happiness. She finds happiness in striving to fulfill her responsibilities, to cultivate wisdom, to develop her talents, and to pursue excellence in all her endeavors. The world being what it is, she knows that excellence must sometimes be its own reward. But no matter how unfair or frustrating others' behavior may be, she refuses to seek solace in a life of rage and self-pity. Rage and self-pity, she knows, are hallmarks of the weak, not of the strong.

At the heart of the conservative feminist's vision is her conception of a universal human nature. Believing that men and women share equally in this nature, she rejects the contemporary feminist view of life as a power struggle, in which self-oriented "interest groups" contend relentlessly for advantage. The conservative feminist knows that it is possible to identify transcendent *human* interests that can mediate between the sexes' competing claims and thereby illuminate a truly common good.

In everything she does, the conservative feminist's watchword is "balance." In her private life, she strives to balance her obligations to others with her quest for personal fulfillment. In her public life, she seeks to promote justice and equality, but also to safeguard individual freedom. Her boldness in pursuit of reform is tempered by her respect for fundamental social values and institutions, which embody the collective wisdom of generations who sought the good life as fervently as she. Prudent in her expectations, tireless in her quest for knowledge, she seeks to explore—and to advance—the conditions necessary for human happiness.

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A Question of Patriot-ism

Why Isn't America Building Missile Defenses Today?

ANGELO CODEVILLA

The Gulf war has transferred anti-missile defense from the realm of theory to that of practice. A few weeks in January and February answered questions that had bedeviled American policymakers for a generation: Would reputation for retaliation (whose is more solid than Israel's?) suffice to deter ballistic missile attack? No. Could *anything* stop ballistic missiles consistently? Patriot interceptors hit almost all of the 60 to 65 Scud missiles at which they were fired. Would people under missile attack prefer to have imperfect defenses, or none at all? Every Israeli neighborhood, every allied unit, wanted a Patriot battery nearby. Americans at home asked whether, if Saddam had possessed long-range missiles, and had fired them at our homes, we would have been as well-protected as the Israelis? No, we would not have been protected at all! The reason is not any lack of technology, but rather that an unrealistic approach to defense has prevented us from using what is available.

The Patriot's example also leads us to examine how the U.S. government has made its decisions about anti-missile defenses. In a nutshell: the United States already possesses anti-missile technology that is far superior to the Patriot. But we cannot use it to defend ourselves, because of our adherence to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. In 1972 the Nixon administration sought the ABM Treaty, which commits us to forgo building a defense on our territory or preparing the base for such defense. In homage to that treaty the U.S. government reversed the construction of a very promising anti-missile system. It also did its best to see that no weapon built in the United States is capable of defending against missiles, and that no research is directly applicable to defense.

Contrary to popular opinion, this did not change in 1983 with President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. Proponents of missile defenses sometimes argue that the ABM Treaty has "held back" SDI. But SDI was *conceived* fully in compliance with the ABM Treaty. It has produced *no* usable anti-missile hardware because it was not *intended* to produce any. In addition, the rhetoric of SDI has obscured the decisions of Presidents Reagan and Bush not to build anti-missile defenses any time in the foreseeable future. Despite the winks and nods, President Bush's latest working of SDI, with the inauspicious label GPALS (gee, pals), is publicly and sincerely pledged to full compliance with the ABM Treaty. So long as the basic anti-defense decision stands, any protection we get will be, like the Patriot, something that slipped through the system.

The lesson of the Scuds is that Americans ought to have as much protection against missiles as our technology can provide, and as soon as possible. We can expect that building anti-missile weapons, instead of just researching them, will encounter stiff opposition from much of the arms control community, the U.S. Air Force, and their allies in the Congress, particularly in the Democratic Party. We can expect opposition from the Soviets. But if the Bush administration were to decide that vulnerability and the ABM Treaty have been bad ideas, it would find both that the domestic political fight is winnable and that we already have very good technology on the shelf, right next to the Patriot.

Ancient Scudbusters

The news media (abetted by cheerleaders for SDI) have given the impression that the Patriot was able to master the Scud only because it embodied the very latest technology. The Patriot, so the story goes, is the "first fruit" of SDI. According to this view, the age of anti-missile defense has begun, as it were, on the ground floor, and many more technical advances will be required before we may "make an informed decision" about whether it is worthwhile to try to defend ourselves against intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). All of this is wrong. In fact, the Patriot's grandfather, the Nike-Hercules air-defense system, could have defended against the Scuds, and perhaps have done an even better job. The Patriot itself, as originally designed, would have done better yet. Nevertheless, the present model Patriot is capable of defending against far more than Scuds. We now have the capability to build surface-to-air missile systems, out of technology elements that have been lying around for a decade, that could provide a serious defense

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AP/Wide World Photos

A Patriot missile is fired at an Iraqi Scud missile during an attack on Israel. The lesson of the Scuds is that Americans ought to have as much protection against missiles as our technology can provide, and as soon as possible.

against ICBMs. Wholly different space-based technologies have also been sidelined, which, if employed, would make ballistic missiles obsolete as weapons of war. We could do all this without nuclear weapons.

The Patriot's radar in the Gulf war saw incoming Scuds about 50 miles away, fired when the warhead was about 20 to 30 miles away, and its interceptor hit the Scuds some five miles or less from the target. Debris from Scuds killed people. Had the Scuds been carrying nuclear weapons, the damage would have been worse. But as early as 1955, the Whippany Radio Laboratory was experimenting with radars that could track warhead-sized objects at 600 miles. The Nike-Hercules interceptor was built to operate at an altitude of 15 miles, and its successor, the Nike-Zeus, even higher. The ABMs of the early 1970s, the Spartan and the Sprint, would have knocked off the Scuds as soon as they came over the horizon—albeit by using small nuclear explosions. Even the Patriot's original design, SAM-D, using a conventional interceptor, would have done a better job than today's model. That is because the SAM-D had a radar exactly twice as powerful as the Patriot's. Hence the SAM-D could have launched its interceptors earlier, and destroyed the warheads farther out, affording better protection against nuclear warheads.

The Patriot's Enemies

Still, we are fortunate to have even the marginal anti-missile protection of today's Patriot. Between 1975 and 1978 the Ford and Carter administrations ordered that the SAM-D's radar power be cut in half, precisely to make sure that it could not intercept ballistic warheads. They did this in homage to the ABM Treaty. Never mind that the Soviet Union was developing a similar (but much more potent) system called the SA-12, and that the U.S. found that the language of the treaty would not support calling the Soviet move a violation. The U.S. government has adhered not to the letter of the treaty, not to Soviet practices under the treaty, but to views of American arms-control fanatics who are against anti-missile defenses of any kind.

Then, in the early 1980s, grasping at the artificial distinction between "tactical" or short-range and "strategic" or long-range ballistic missiles, the Army set out to restore some of the Patriot's lost capability, with the help of then Senators Dan Quayle and Pete Wilson, and over the opposition of arms-control watchdogs within the Pentagon as well as the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives, which voted to kill the Patriot upgrade in 1986. It was restored by the then-Republican Senate. Since restoring the radar's power would have required starting from scratch, the Army improved the software for processing the existing radar's returns, and it provided a fuze to explode the interceptor closer to the incoming warhead. These marginal improvements were enough to give the Patriot the anti-missile capacity it demonstrated in the Gulf war. But thanks to opposition to missile defenses within the executive branch, the Pentagon had bought only a handful of fully modified

The United States already possesses anti-missile technology that is far superior to the Patriot. But we cannot use it to defend ourselves because of our adherence to the ABM Treaty.

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Patriots before U.S. troops were sent to Saudi Arabia in August 1990. The Patriots that saved so many lives were thus built in a crash program. A further improvement is now planned for the Patriot. This time the radar will be upgraded—but still not to the SAM-D's power.

Rock of AEGIS

Any modern medium- or high-altitude surface-to-air missile has some inherent capabilities against any ballistic missile, regardless of its range. The Patriot radar has tracked targets far smaller than a Scud, and roughly the size of an ICBM warhead. Its computer is fast enough to track an ICBM warhead. While an ICBM's *maximum speed* is five times a Scud's, by the time an ICBM warhead is well into the atmosphere, it is less than twice as fast. So, given that other radars would tell the Patriot where to point, it might well be able to intercept ICBM warheads—especially if it were fired a couple of seconds early. This means that even the humble Patriot, were it deployed near American cities, would provide a measure of anti-missile protection—better than nothing.

In exchange for eight years and $24 billion, SDI has given us not a single usable device.

Now imagine marrying the Patriot missile to a more capable radar, that of the Navy's AEGIS air-defense system, for example. This is hardly a futuristic system. It has been deployed for nearly a decade. But it can see a warhead-sized object 200 miles away, can track hundreds of targets, and can handle over a dozen intercepts within a few seconds. Patriots guided by AEGIS could make intercepts farther out, and more of them. What would happen if some 500 Patriot-AEGIS mobile firing units were deployed around the United States?

First, any individual within about 40 miles of such a unit could be confident that he would survive attacks of less than a dozen warheads aimed at his area simultaneously. Second, attackers might well be deterred by the necessity of concentrating their fire at least tenfold on a much smaller number of targets in order to make sure that at least some warheads get through. Such meaningful defense and deterrence would be achieved by well-nigh ancient technology.

Foot-Dragging on Arrow

Now add some technology that, though anything but new, has been sidetracked. First, consider how easily we could replace the Patriot with a faster and longer-ranged missile. The old Sprint ABM was many times faster than the Patriot. But it carried a nuclear warhead and could not alone home in on its target. Today we have any number of good terminal guidance systems that could work for non-nuclear missiles between the speed of the Patriot and the Sprint. Instead of building interceptors at these speeds, however, SDI is researching the technically difficult task of building a terminal guidance system for even faster ones. Prior to the Gulf war, Israeli officials had been complaining that the Pentagon had been foot-dragging on development of the U.S.–Israeli Arrow, a slower interceptor that has roughly three times the ABM capacity of the Patriot. Perhaps the Israelis now will complain harder, and Americans will ask why they can't have Arrows too.

The Pentagon has announced, as part of GPALS, the decision to actually engineer an interceptor system called THAAD (Theater Advanced Air Defense) for possible deployment in the late 1990s. If it were built to its maximum potential, it would be about 10 times as effective against warheads as the Patriot. But its strength depends on the number of modules in its radar—which can go up to four—and this number will be subject to bargaining between Pentagon arms controllers and defense-builders.

Second, consider interceptors that are slower but work at higher altitudes. In the mid-1970s the Army's Homing Overlay Experiment (HOE) program envisaged sending optically guided kill vehicles, a dozen at a time, high into the path of attacking missiles. Each kill vehicle would smash into a warhead. A central instrument package would accompany each dozen and would discriminate between warheads and decoys. Then in 1979, to avoid charges of conflict with the ABM Treaty, HOE was reduced to one kill vehicle per rocket. This required putting all the discrimination devices into each kill vehicle—involving greater cost, more time, less efficiency. In 1983 HOE was taken over by SDI, and more delays occurred as engineers made sure that the experimental hardware would be entirely unsuitable for operational use. Then after a successful test in 1984, HOE became ERIS. As the ERIS program would meet each set of targets, the SDI office would set new ones. HOE was supposed to be operational in 1985. ERIS has had operational dates of 1989, 1991, '92, and now '95 attached to it. Meanwhile, circa 1981, spy James Harper sold HOE technology to the Soviets (via Polish intelligence). Today the Soviet SH-11, a very high-altitude interceptor deployed near Moscow (and who knows where else), probably carries optically guided homing vehicles.

Essential to the success of high-altitude interceptors are the systems that provide precise information on the tracks of incoming warheads. In the late 1970s the Army began to develop a set of infrared detectors to be mounted onto a high-flying aircraft. These could literally take the temperatures of incoming warheads and decoys, track them, and discriminate between them. Its computers would do for the battle against incoming warheads the job that AWACS aircraft do for battles against enemy fighters. These infrared-equipped planes were first scheduled to become operational in 1985. Some 20 would have covered the country. But by 1984 the SDI office had ordered major improvements in technology. Only a half dozen of the new models would be required. But alas, the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization also ordered that the detectors be tested apart from the laser range-finder, lest the system run afoul of some Americans' view of the ABM Treaty. In 1991, these

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airplanes are nowhere near being operational. For similar reasons, the United States has failed to provide its old infrared satellites at geo-synchronous orbit, known as DSP, the on-board data processing that would allow them to act as spotters for anti-missile weapons.

How SDI Helped Sidetrack Defense

Conventional wisdom has it that on March 23, 1983, President Reagan decided to marshal the United States' resources to defend against ballistic missiles. Nothing could be further from the truth. Reagan insisted on adherence to the ABM Treaty, which prohibits anti-missile defense, and he relied on the military bureaucracy, which sees anti-missile defense as a threat to its budget. The Fletcher panel, which defined SDI, contained none of the most prominent advocates of building anti-missile weapons in the scientific community. The actual Strategic Defense Initiative—not the image of it that delighted uninformed conservatives and won votes for the Republican Party—was a creature of anti-defense bureaucrats from its very inception.

SDI arbitrarily defined technical requirements so as to disqualify any currently available devices. By doing so it imposed Gresham's law (the bad drives out the good) onto the field. What sort of laser was needed to destroy a missile? Instead of working backward from the hardness of existing missiles to the power required to overcome that hardness from any given distance, the program took an arbitrary figure for missile hardness (up to a thousand times greater than any actual one), then took an arbitrarily great distance, and arrived at arbitrarily high laser-power levels. Hence there would be no talk of building the chemical lasers that one could build. Instead there would be expensive, foredoomed efforts to research X-ray lasers and ground-based free-electron lasers at Livermore Labs.

As regards battle management, the program demanded absolute centralization. Not surprisingly, the computer requirements were outrageously out of reach. Never mind that common sense and existing technology argued for decentralized assignment of targets. The SDIO would pay hundreds of millions of dollars to develop the Boost-phase Surveillance and Tracking System (BSTS). And of course the SDIO lavishly financed "red team" shops like the Sandia National Laboratory whose job was to dream up ever more fanciful requirements that would ensure that no technology would ever be adequate.

Not So Brilliant Pebbles

Today the SDIO is pushing "Brilliant Pebbles." Many are under the false impression that this program presents a decision to build space-based interceptors as quickly as possible. In fact, space-based interceptors have been feasible for many years, albeit heavier and less sophisticated.

The goal of the "Brilliant Pebbles" program—guidance computers the size of a cigarette pack and as powerful as the Cray supercomputer—cannot affect the two essential elements of a decision regarding space-based interceptors. First, shall we have such things at all? A guidance system that weighs two pounds does not compel a "yes," while one that weighs 20 compels a "no." And why not require a further reduction to two ounces? Second, regardless of its size and sophistication, any given space-based interceptor with the speed envisioned for "Brilliant Pebbles" has about a 4 percent chance of being in a position to intercept during the boost phase of any given missile launched from any given point on the earth. That means that 1,000 "Brilliant Pebbles" could make only some 40 boost-phase intercepts of missiles from a single Soviet base.

Making them even more "brilliant" would not change the result. That is because after a certain level of proficiency (which we achieved long ago) guidance systems do not make the difference in the success of space-based interceptors. What does? The same factors that make the difference in real estate: location, location, and location. And there are only two ways of increasing the chance that interceptors will be in the right place at the right time: Make them faster. But rockets are inherently slow. Or deploy more of them. "Brilliant Pebbles" would start to work reasonably well if one were to deploy on the order of 50,000. But then again so would 50,000 dumber rockets. One doesn't need a sophisticated guidance system to decide whether to build this kind of interceptor.

Despite total air supremacy, U.S. forces were unable to locate and destroy Iraq's mobile missile launchers. The only way to deal with mobile missiles is defense.

The SDI Pork Barrel

In 1983, and every year since, Senator Wallop—the congressional godfather of anti-missile defense—has warned that SDI was a welfare program for well-connected scientists. Finally, in 1990 the Congress officially recognized SDI as a standard pork-barrel program by passing the Bingaman–Shelby Amendment that reserved a significant portion of authorized funds for projects in the sponsoring senators' home states of New Mexico and Alabama. The administration went along.

On the other side of the ledger, the SDIO has made sure that every program would be designed *ab initio* to produce no hardware that could actually be used as part of an anti-missile system. The enforcer has been a Defense Department unit headed by a civil servant named Lee Minichiello, not a household word but a man who has influenced the actual results of SDI more than presidents or secretaries of defense. A secret annex to Department of Defense Instruction S-5100.71 divides

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programs into three categories. Under the first, "conceptual design or laboratory testing," the very conception of a device, the very design of "either a prototype or a breadboard model" must be certifiably free of the *intention* of serving as an ABM component. An engineer proposing a program must credibly argue that its actual product is intended to be unusable for defense. Under the second category, "field testing of devices that are not ABM components or prototypes of ABM components," devices that are actually tested must be either subscale or must have key elements removed, so as to be unusable for defense. Thus the aforementioned optical version of AWACS must be tested with a number of its detectors removed—in effect with blinders. Thus also the Zenith Star laser had to be built several times too small to be of any use, and the various optical sensors of space-based interceptors had to be run against satellites rather than against missile boosters. The list of such preemptive cripplings is as long as the list of Category II programs. Programs in the third category—specifically intended for ABM purposes and allowed by the treaty—have been structured in ways that would restrict or delay their usefulness. Thus the Terminal Intercept Radar was built with structural supports that are actually part of a building, to make sure that any mobile version would require a redesign. And the latest versions of ERIS were designed with the test instrumentation so thoroughly integrated that a total redesign would be necessary before the device could be used as a weapon.

The SDI program demanded absolute centralization in battle management. Not surprisingly, the computer requirements were outrageously out of reach.

Decision Time for ABM

In exchange for eight years and $24 billion, the SDI program has given us not a single usable device. Instead of asking themselves, "What can we do with this technology to defend the American people?," SDIO managers have been told to ask, "What use of this technology will satisfy the views of the president and the Congress regarding the ABM Treaty?" Rather than come up with weapons systems whose effectiveness can be tested, it creates nebulous bureaucratic entities such as "Global Protection Against Limited Strikes" whose feasibility cannot be measured by commonsense observation. Meanwhile conservatives have allowed the politically potent question, "Are you for or against building this life-saving weapon?," to be transformed into the politically narcotic question, "Are you for or against SDI?" Thus leftist congressmen have shielded their home fronts by voting billions "for SDI," while conservatives have made heroic fusses whenever "SDI funding" has been "saved," or the SDIO reports its latest "success."

The first step in any serious anti-missile program would be for President Bush to make an unambiguous decision about the ABM Treaty. Either it is better to rely for our protection on deterrence bolstered by treaties, or it is better to rely on whatever defensive devices we can build. This has never been a technical question. The Strategic Defense Initiative has abetted two presidents in a charade in which they pretended to defend the country while not quite doing so.

The hardest part of reaching such a decision will be resolving internal conflicts within the administration, and especially within the military itself. Once a decision is made to build anti-missile defenses, the opposition from the *New York Times* editorial page, the MIT physics department, the Arms Control Association, and key members of the Democratic Party can easily be overcome. All the president would have to do is to ask the American people whether they would rather be in the position of the Israelis before or after they had Patriots. Then he could publicize the list of those who voted against the Patriot upgrade in 1986. Constituents with family and friends who served in the Gulf would like to know.

Second, responsibility for developing and purchasing the weaponry should be assigned to the people who would be in charge of using it. Today no one in the U.S. government has "the mission" to defend against ballistic missiles. (The U.S. Space Command is literally nobody.) That mission should be given to the U.S. Army or, preferably, to a wholly new military service (analogous to the Soviet PVO) that would have no other task. Seldom is anything new or great achieved except by people who really want to achieve it, whose mandate for achieving it is unambiguous, and who have no conflicting interests.

Third, the program should consist of building individual weapons. Never again should we indulge in abstract system-building, matching hypothetical complex defenses against hypothetical complex offenses. We ought to build real weapons against threats that exist or that intelligence can see coming, and we ought to trust each individual weapon or sensor to take a chunk out of the problem. We ought to have learned the futility of trying to turn battles into wholly predictable video games. The more different kinds of defenses we build, and the more of them we build, the safer we will be against more contingencies.

Fourth, the building of defensive weapons should be done under total suspension of the Pentagon's rules for managing R&D and procurement, and entirely outside the Pentagon's system of scientific review committees. I am suggesting a total throwback to the pre-Robert McNamara way of doing business. Before McNamara's system, the U.S. used to bring weapons based on wholly new technologies from conception to operation in about three years. Today, even as the cycle of innovation in the computer industry moves faster and faster, the time it takes to move any new weapon from conception to

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operation has passed 15 years and is continuing to lengthen. Today any given military item is most likely obsolete in comparison with its civilian cognate.

The next director-designate of a major program in this field ought to ask the president and Congress publicly: Do you really want me to continue wasting the taxpayers' money by doing things as they have been done in recent years, or do you want me to build defensive weapons as best we can now?

What can be rescued from SDI? Quite a lot. There is literally more technology for discriminating decoys than there is for making decoys. There is enough technology to identify every kind of ballistic missile by its plume, and to find exactly where the plume ends and the missile begins. There is terminal guidance galore for intercepts within or outside the atmosphere. There is pointing and tracking technology sufficient to point to a basketball over Boston from over Los Angeles. There is enough know-how to produce two vastly different kinds of space-based lasers. There is enough to build interceptors for high, medium, and low altitudes, and much more. In short, there is far more technology than there is wisdom to use it.

Off-the-Shelf Technology

We ought to build what anti-missile weapons we can with the tools available to us at any given time. Today that would allow us to build defenses entirely adequate for any threat, existing or on the horizon.

Mobile ABM units stationed near cities and moving unpredictably around places that might be targets for missile attacks could intercept perhaps a dozen warheads coming into any given area. Since cities are not normally the targets of rational military attacks, such protection is likely to be more than sufficient. That is not the case for such high-priority military targets as air and missile bases, which might receive hundreds of warheads. To protect them—and to further ensure the protection of cities—we ought to build perhaps 500 multi-warhead, high-altitude optical interceptors. Ten bases would be more than enough to cover the country. To thin out any attack at its source we ought to build a fleet of space-based chemical lasers. This technology was mature a decade ago. This is the technology that first raised interest in space-based defense. None of the developments (fast-burn boosters, super-hard missile skins, etc.) that were supposed to make these lasers obsolete have made an appearance. Some 32 of these lasers would put a very big dent into the Soviet missile fleet, even were it to be launched instantly in its entirety. Space-based interceptors have a role to play as bodyguards for space-based sensors and laser weapons. This role obviates their inability to cover large areas, because they would strike only objects coming at them. There is no way to guarantee complete safety for the U.S. and its allies. But if we build what we can, we might just be safe, though we would be more likely to achieve deterrence of war than safety *in* war.

Who can guarantee that a dying Soviet Union—or one of its parts—will not strike us?

Today we are spending some $3 billion a year on SDI. We might as well get something for it. The ballistic missiles fired in the Gulf war will not be the last ever to be fired in anger. Future aggressors may have the ability as well as the intent to strike the United States. Gorbachev's response to the collapse of Communism has been to institute a dictatorship of the military and the KGB. And indeed these two institutions are the only world-class assets of the Soviet Union. Who can guarantee that a dying regime—or one of its parts—will not strike us? And if we do not have defenses, how shall we avoid disaster?

The Gulf war has taught us that ballistic missile threats are real, not theoretical. One Scud missile caused almost as many U.S. deaths as the entire ground war. Despite thousands of air sorties under the best possible circumstances, U.S. forces were unable to destroy Iraq's mobile missile launchers. U.S. intelligence was unable to estimate the number of launchers, much less find them reliably. No, the only way to deal with mobile missiles is with defense. We need it today.

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MULTICULTURALISM 101

Great Books of the Non-Western World

DINESH D'SOUZA

Hey, hey, ho, ho, Western culture's got to go, the angry students chanted on the lawn at Stanford University. They wore blue jeans, Los Angeles Lakers T-shirts, Reeboks, Oxford button-downs, Vuarnet sunglasses, baseball caps, Swatches. No tribal garb, Middle Eastern veils, or Japanese samurai swords were in sight. Observers could not recall a sari, kimono, or serape. None of the women's feet were bound. Clearly the rejection of the ways of the West was a partial one. Nevertheless, it was expressed with passion and vehemence, and commanded respect for its very intensity.

As at Stanford, American universities today routinely face protests and demands to downplay the teaching of Western or "Eurocentric" culture and to give greater emphasis to non-Western or global culture. Partly in sympathy with these demands, partly in response to pressure, university leaders are moving quickly to replace required courses in Western classics with what they call a multicultural curriculum.

After a much-publicized debate, Stanford eliminated its Western civilization core curriculum and established a new requirement called Cultures, Ideas, and Values (CIV). The new curriculum includes a hodgepodge of Western and non-Western texts assigned at the professor's discretion. Shakespeare, Locke, and Marx are assigned often as texts, but they are supplemented by the likes of *Popol Vuh, The Son of Old Man Hat,* and *I, Rigoberta Menchu.*

At Mount Holyoke and Dartmouth students must now take a course in Third World culture although there is no Western culture requirement. The University of Wisconsin recently instituted a mandatory non-Western and ethnic studies course, although students need not study the classics, American politics, or American history. Berkeley's newly adopted ethnic course requirement is the only undergraduate course that all students must take. The University of Cincinnati established an "American Diversity and World Cultures" requirement. Cleveland State University now requires a course dealing with a non-European culture. Meanwhile, the bastions of core curricula in Western classics, such as Columbia and the University of Chicago, are under pressure to climb on the multicultural bandwagon.

The study of non-Western cultures certainly merits an important place in American education. If pursued as a complement to rather than as a substitute for study of the West, learning about the achievements and failings of other societies can help us better understand our own. The great works of other civilizations, like those of our own, can broaden our minds and sharpen our thinking. There are practical reasons, too, for Americans, who will have to compete in a global economy, to learn about the languages and cultures of non-European lands.

Closing of the Multicultural Mind

The question is not whether to teach students about other cultures, but how to do so. As currently offered, multicultural curricula in American universities produce puzzlement, if not disbelief, among many educated citizens of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. The materials presented to students bear virtually no resemblance to the ideas most deeply cherished in their cultures. Instead, American students receive a selective polemical interpretation of non-Western societies, revealing less about those societies than about the ideological prejudices of those who manage multicultural education.

For example, a course outline for the "Europe and the Americas" track of Stanford's CIV curriculum suggests that texts be uniformly subjected to a "race and gender" analysis, that is, viewed from the perspective of oppressed women and persons of color:

> Works of imaginative literature that establish paradigms of the relationship between European and "other" will be analyzed, *e.g.*, Euripides' *Medea,* whose main character is both "barbarian" and female; the medieval *Song of Roland,* which polarizes Christian and pagan (Moslem) stereotypes; Shakespeare's *Tempest,* whose figure of Caliban

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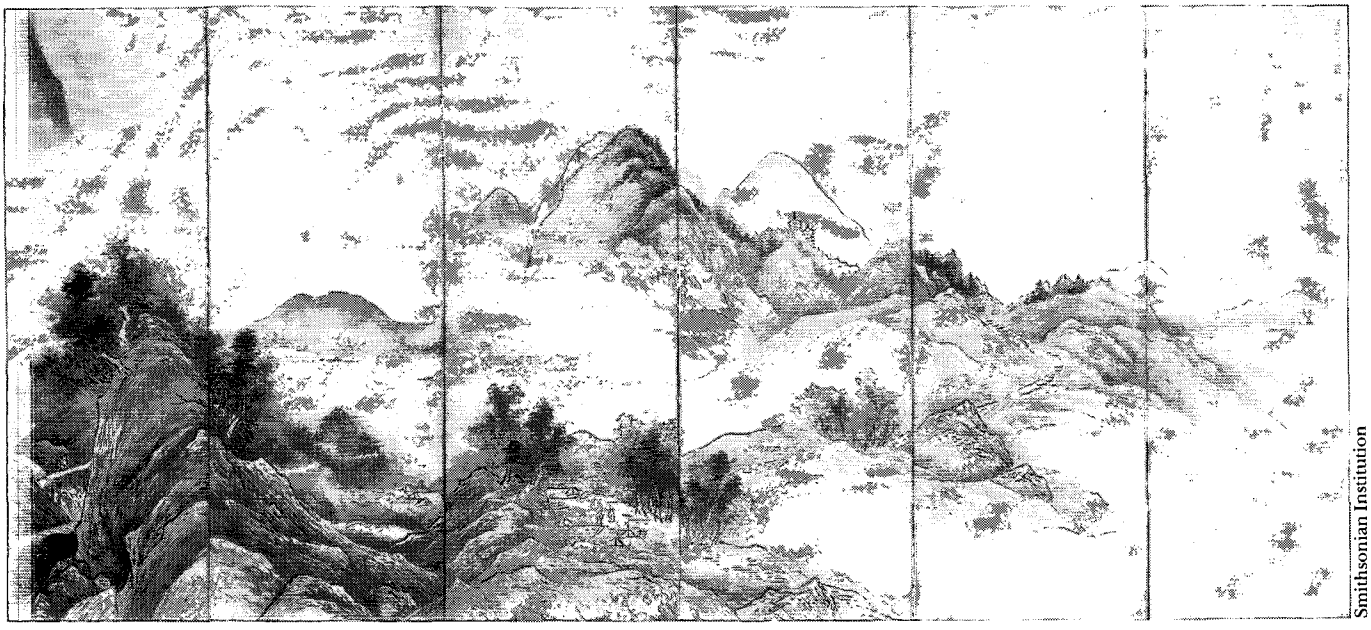

Smithsonian Institution

draws on contemporary reports of natives in the recently discovered "new world"; Cesaire's *Une Tempête,* an adaptation of the Shakespeare play that uses the Caliban–Prospero encounter as a model, in part, for the colonizer–colonized relations.

If it seems unfair to reduce Euripides and Shakespeare to a mere function of colonialism and racial and gender stereotypes, non-Western texts suffer the same trivialization. Thus the outline continues, "Race, gender, and class are all thematized in Barrio's autobiography and Anzaldua's poetic essays. Gender is a central issue in Jamaica Kincaid's novel *Annie John,* a mother–daughter story. Roumain's *Masters of the Dew* plays out a class drama around the conflict between traditionalist peasant culture and modern proletarian consciousness."

Travelling with Rigoberta

A representative text in this track of the new Stanford core curriculum is *I, Rigoberta Menchu,* the life story of an Indian woman from Guatemala as told to the feminist writer Elisabeth Burgos-Debray. In the introduction, we learn from Burgos-Debray that Rigoberta "speaks for all the Indians of the American continent." Further, she represents oppressed people everywhere: "The voice of Rigoberta Menchu allows the defeated to speak."

So how did this authentic voice of oppression in Latin America link up with her translator? It turns out that they met in Paris, where Rigoberta Menchu and Burgos-Debray were both attending a socialist conference. Rigoberta's use of phrases such as "bourgeois youths" and "Molotov cocktail" do not sound like the usual vocabulary of a traditional Indian peasant. Suspicions that Rigoberta does not represent the Third World peasant population are reinforced by her chapter titled "Rigoberta Renounces Marriage and Motherhood," which describes her feminist consciousness.

If Rigoberta does not represent traditional Mayan villagers, whom does she represent? The answer is that she represents a projection of Western radical and feminist views onto Latin Indian culture. As Burgos-Debray suggests in her introduction, Rigoberta provides independent Third World confirmation of the validity of socialist and feminist ideologies. She is a mouthpiece for a sophisticated Western critique of society, all the more useful because it issues from a seemingly authentic peasant source. Rigoberta's importance to Stanford is that she provides a model with whom American minority and female students can identify; they too are oppressed like her.

In a crucial passage in the book, Rigoberta is identified with quadruple oppression. She is a person of color, and thus a victim of racism. She is a woman, and

"Forget Confucius. I don't want to study China. I want to study myself."

thus a victim of sexism. She lives in Central America, which is a victim of European and American colonialism. If this were not bad enough, she is an Indian, victimized by Latino culture within Central America.

Rigoberta's claim to fame, therefore, is not anything she did or wrote but her status as a consummate victim—the modern Saint Sebastian, pierced by the arrows of North American white male cruelty. Rigoberta has experienced genuine tragedies, with her father, mother, and brother all having been killed by Guatemalan armed forces. But her life story is portrayed as an explicit indictment of the West and Western institutions. She fits into the historicist framework of contemporary scholarship, which employs Hegelian and Marxist terms to describe history as inevitable progress toward the end of proletarian emancipation. Thus Rigoberta becomes wor-

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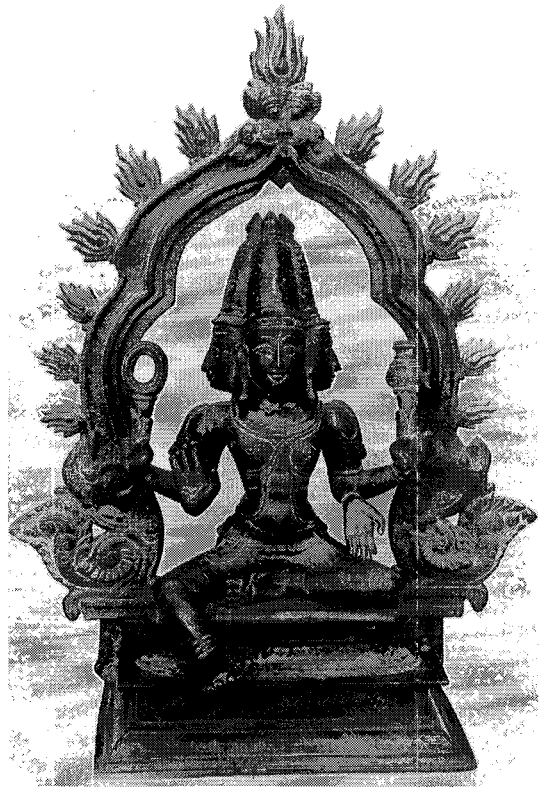
thy of canonization—quite literally, worthy of admission into the Stanford canon.

Multiculturalism as Parochialism

Multicultural curricula at Stanford and elsewhere generally reflect little interest in the most enduring, influential, or aesthetically powerful products of non-Western cultures. "The protesters here weren't interested in building up the anthropology department or immersing themselves in foreign languages," comments Stanford philosophy instructor Walter Lammi. Alejandro Sweet-Cordero, spokesman for a Chicano group on campus, told the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "We're not saying we need to study Tibetan philosophy. We're arguing that we need to understand what made our society what it is." Black activist William King says, "Forget Confucius. We are trying to prepare ourselves for the multicultural challenge we will face in the future. I don't want to study China. I want to study myself." Thus does the non-Western project begin to reveal its own paradoxical provincialism.



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It is impossible to understand the American university's project to reform the core curriculum without recognizing that the impetus for change virtually always comes from a triangular alliance of student protesters, faculty advocates, and ideologically sympathetic administrators, all committed to the civil rights, feminist, and homosexual rights struggles originating in the 1960s. For these activists, the purpose of studying other cultures is to cherish them; to investigate alternatives to racist, sexist, and homophobic Western mores; to celebrate the new pluralism and diversity. Stanford classics professor Marshall McCall put it bluntly, "The pressure is on here to affirm those who have been 'out,' and to spare those cultures and traditions any criticism."

The Lash of the East

But any search for superior alternatives to the West produces an alarming discovery. By and large, non-Western cultures have no developed tradition of racial equality—not only do they violate equality in practice, but the very principle is alien, regarded by many with suspicion and hostility. Moreover, many of these cultures have deeply ingrained ideas of male superiority. The Koran, for instance, stipulates that "men have authority over women, because Allah has made the one superior to the other." The renowned Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyya advises, "When a husband beats his wife for misbehavior, he should not exceed 10 lashes." Many Chinese continue to abide by an old saying from the *Ts'ai-fei-lu*, "If you care for your son, you don't go easy on his studies. If you care for your daughter, you don't go easy on her foot-binding." Such practices as dowry, purdah, wife-burning, and clitoral mutilation are widespread in non-Western cultures.

It is perhaps pointless to bring up the issue of attitudes toward homosexuality and other "alternative life-styles," which are forms of behavior likely to warrant segregation, imprisonment, even capital punishment in various Third World countries. In Cuba homosexuals are often thrown in jail and in China they are sometimes subjected to shock treatment, which is credited with a high "cure rate." Basil Davidson, in his book *The African Genius*, observes that African tribes such as the Nyakusa, although tolerant in matters of sex, regard homosexuality as a sin and a sickness "occasioned by witchcraft."

Since the race and gender viewpoints of the new advocates of multiculturalism and diversity find little support in other cultures, it seems reasonable to expect that these cultures would be roundly denounced as even more backward and retrograde than the West. But, for political reasons, this is totally unacceptable, since the developing world is viewed as suffering the same kind of oppression that blacks, Hispanics, women, and homosexuals suffer in America. It is crucial for the activists to maintain victim solidarity. As a result, instead of being subjected to charges of misogyny and prejudice, non-Western cultures are ransacked to find "representative" figures who are congenial to the Western propaganda agenda—then, like Rigoberta Menchu, they are triumphantly presented as the "repressed voices" of diversity, fit for the solemn admiration and emulation of American undergraduates.

Quetzalcoatl and Safe Sex

Advocates of multicultural curricula on all campuses, not just Stanford, are plagued by these challenges. One of the most successful texts, widely assigned in non-Western courses across the country, is a book produced in direct rebuttal to Allan Bloom and E. D. Hirsch titled *Multicultural Literacy*. Published by Graywolf Press in St. Paul, Minnesota, the book begins with the plausible contention that, in a global culture, it is insufficient for American students to study only the cultural ingredients of the West—this legitimate preparation for self-understanding and democratic self-government should be extended to the study of other civilizations as well.

Unfortunately, *Multicultural Literacy* devotes virtually no space to the philosophical, religious, and literary classics of China, Japan, Indonesia, India, Persia, the

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Arab world, Africa, or Latin America. Nor does it examine dramatic political changes that have brought non-Western cultures into new cooperation, or confrontation, with Western ideals. Instead, the book includes 13 protest essays, including Michele Wallace's autobiographical "Invisibility Blues" and Paula Gunn Allen's "Who Is Your Mother: The Red Roots of White Feminism."

It also offers a Hirsch-style laundry list of alleged Third World vocabulary. This bewildering catalog includes: "Abdul-Jabbar, Allende, ancestor worship, Arafat, ashram, barrio, beatnik, Biko, Bogota, Cajun, Cardenal, child abuse, condom, covert operations, dadaism, de Beauvoir, domestic violence, Dr. J, economic violence, Farsi, Friedan, genitals, Gilgamesh, Greenpeace, Harlem, Hopi, Hurston, indigenous, internment camps, juju music, karma, kundalini yoga, Kurosawa, liberation theology, Little Red Book, Mandela, McCarthy, migrant worker, misogyny, mutual assured destruction, neo-Nazi, New Right, nuclear freeze, Ojibwa tribe, Plath, premenstrual syndrome, prophylactic, Quetzalcoatl, rap music, safe sex, samba, sexism, socialized medicine, Soweto, Tao Te Ching, Tutu, wars of liberation, Wollstonecraft, Zimbabwe."

What this eccentric selection of a few hundred words reflects is nothing more than the limited grazings in Third World pastures by American intellectuals of a left-wing and feminist bent. The new multiculturalism ignores the true diversity of other cultures; instead, its brand of diversity leads to intellectual conformity—where Asian, African, Latin American, and Middle Eastern cultures are forced onto the procrustean bed of Western progressive preconception. Moreover, this non-Western project is not above distorting and abusing other civilizations for its own ends; the distinctive ideas and ways of Third World peoples are only permitted expression through the refracted lens of American liberationist ideology.

Smithsonian Institution

Principles of True Multiculturalism

University leaders who are committed to an honest and critical analysis of other cultures should replace ersatz multiculturalism with a better alternative. A serious and authentic multicultural curriculum would satisfy three basic criteria.

First, it would study non-Western ideas and institutions in relation to, and not as a substitute for, the great works of Western thought. Educated citizens should know the philosophical, historical, and literary basics of their own culture. Just as an educated Chinese would be familiar with Confucius, so it is imperative that Americans know something about Thomas Jefferson and the Bible. Indeed students are better equipped to study other cultures when they have critically reflected on their own, because they then have a base of knowledge against which to compare new ideas and new experience; indeed, they are in a position to develop standards of aesthetic and moral judgment that transcend the conventions of any particular culture.

Second, a multicultural curriculum should teach the "best that has been thought and said" in other cultures. It should not be arrogantly assumed that Western thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle should be studied to determine whether their ideas are true or false, while the people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America should be studied just for their social and economic anthropology, and particularly for their victimization at the hands of the West. Non-Western teachers such as Confucius, Mohammed, and Zoroaster advanced controversial theses about human happiness, how society should be organized, and the role of women. And these deserve to be taken seriously, which is to say, subjected to the same critical scrutiny as Socrates and Rousseau.

It defeats the purpose of multicultural education to cater to the political prejudices of Westerners. In fact the greatest advantage of such education is that it performs a similar function as a serious reading of Western classics: it helps to liberate American students of the late 20th century from the provincialism of the moment. Just as the classic texts of Thucydides, Dante, and Shakespeare draw us backward into time, providing a rare glimpse into the minds and lives of the past, non-Western classics draw us across the boundaries of space, providing us with an experience of the way other peoples think and live. It is no argument against these texts that they do not always speak directly to the passions of the moment; their benefit is that they provide spiritual, intellectual, and emotional encounters otherwise unavailable to us. And at their finest, they illuminate the enduring questions of life and love and death with which all human beings, past and present, native and foreign, have ever grappled.

While non-Western classics may be taught for their powerful, if controversial and unfashionable, vision of an alternate way of life, a third principle for multicultural curricula should be political and cultural relevance. This does not contradict earlier points—it simply means that Americans should study other civilizations both for what is timeless about them, and for what is timely. By learning

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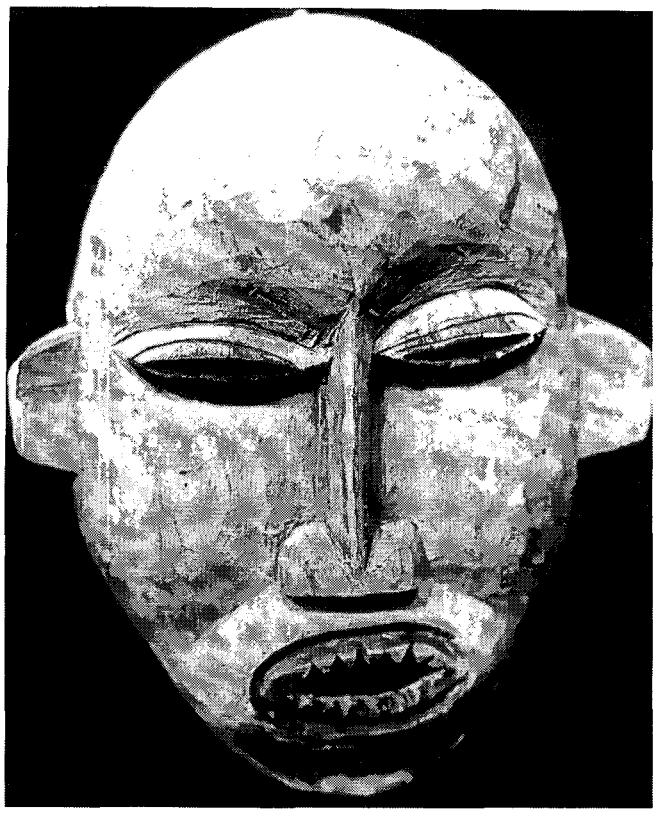

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about societies that vitally intersect with the West, students can better prepare themselves to deal with the most pressing challenges of a global society.

As the world becomes a smaller place, great political and social currents from different societies are likely to come into increasing contact and collision. Three of these are Asian (especially Japanese) capitalism, which has proved so successful in world markets; the rapid spread of Protestant evangelicalism and democracy throughout traditionally Catholic and autocratic Latin America; and Islamic radicalism and fundamentalism, perhaps the most formidable ideological opponent of Western liberal democracy in the aftermath of the Cold War. Students should consider such questions as why the "age of secularism" has produced such a powerful religious revival in the Arab world; what relationship, if any, Islamic fundamentalism bears to American fundamentalism; how free churches and free elections will change the landscape of Hispanic culture, and indeed of the Americas; and whether the Confucian ethic of East Asia is as advantageous for capitalism as the "Protestant ethic" of Max Weber.

A Model Curriculum

What follows is a list of "Great Books" that could be offered in a non-Western curriculum. These texts could be taught alongside a similar sequence in Western classics, or Western and non-Western texts could be integrated into a single core curriculum. Obviously this outline does not exhaust the list of important works produced in other cultures; it is intended to suggest the kind of approach that should guide serious advocates of multiculturalism. The titles are accompanied by brief accounts of the texts and some themes they raise.

Written in Sanskrit between 800 and 400 B.C., the ***Upanishads*** represent sacred spiritual teaching for the Hindus. The word "upanishad" means a sitting, instruction at the foot of a sage. Although there are more than a hundred upanishads, about a dozen are well known, and of them the *Bhagvad Gita*—the lessons of life communicated by Lord Krishna to the archer Arjun, amidst the fury of combat—is undoubtedly the most influential. The philosopher Schopenhauer said, after studying these verses, that their reading "has been the consolation of my life, and will be after my death." The best place to approach the *Upanishads* may be selections from the *Katha*, *Chandogya*, and *Svetasvatara* upanishads. In the latter we read, "With upright body, head and neck lead the mind and its power into the heart; and the Om of Brahman will be thy boat, with which to cross the rivers of fear." The teaching of the *Upanishads* is that God must not be sought as a Being separate from us, but rather as a sublime force within us, enabling us to rise above our mortal limitations. The influence of the *Upanishads* has contributed to a widespread conviction, across the Indian subcontinent, that it is a waste of time to combat social injustice because true liberation comes from the inner soul's receptivity to the divine calling.

Although it dates back to 320–400 B.C., Sun Tzu's ***The Art of War*** remains a classic of military strategy that has influenced the conduct of battles from ancient China right up to the time of Mao Zedong. Among Western texts only Clausewitz's *On War* compares to Sun Tzu in profound psychological reflection of the human spirit under conditions of hostility, and of the two Sun Tzu reads as less dated and more timely. Like Clausewitz, Sun Tzu believed that the moral, intellectual, and circumstantial aspects of war, and not just military force, are decisive. "Numbers by themselves confer no advantage," he said. He emphasized attacking the *mind* of the enemy so the

The new multiculturalism ignores the true diversity of other cultures.

battle could be over before it began: "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill." Sun Tzu stressed decisiveness ("Hesitancy in a general is a great calamity"), swiftness ("While we have heard of blundering swiftness in war, we have not yet seen a clever offensive that was prolonged"), and surprise ("Offer the enemy a bait to lure him, feign disorder, and then strike"). For all his martial advice, Sun Tzu recognized the ultimate futility of conflict: "There has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefitted." Even as we return to peace, Sun Tzu reminds us of our human proclivity toward aggression and conquest; as long as this proclivity endures, *The Art of War* will continue to illuminate the principles of human struggle.

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Confucius' ***Analects***, compiled by his pupils soon after the master's death in the 5th century B.C., reveal his teachings, which have become the foundation of Chinese thought. Like Socrates, his rough contemporary, Confucius believed that men should seek virtue for its own sake rather than because it promises a reward, either in this life or the next; he also shared Socrates' view that the contemplative life is the highest calling. "The gentleman understands what is moral," Confucius tells his interlocutor. "The small man understands what is profitable." The Confucian life is dedicated to the relentless pursuit of moral improvement, through refinement of such character traits as courage and benevolence.

> Tsu-kung asked, "All in the village like him. What do you think of that?"
>
> The Master said, "That is not enough."
>
> "All in the village dislike him. What do you think of that?"
>
> The Master said, "That is not enough either. Tell me that those people in his village who are good like him, and those who are bad dislike him. That would be better."

Western students who study Confucius confront a very unfamiliar worldview, one that takes a fatalistic approach to reforming social institutions, emphasizes unqualified obedience within the family, and embraces rigid class structures and emperor worship. A less pliant approach to political oppression may be found in Mencius, whose doctrine of rulers existing for the good of the people was unfortunately ignored for most of Chinese history.

The ***Tao Te Ching*** or "way of life" was primarily composed by the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu a few centuries before Christ. This collection of didactic segments, hymns, arguments, and aphorisms outlines the vision of the Chinese mystics who advocated a life of simplicity,

Sun Tzu emphasized attacking the *mind* of the enemy to end the battle before it began.

frugality, and closeness to the rhythm of nature. One of the central terms is "Wei wu wei," or literally "to do without doing." This paradoxical advice urges stillness and alertness, so that nature's course, the Way or ultimate reality, can act through us without human interruption or distraction. Although sometimes elusive, the Taoist philosophy of selflessness and mystical quest for unity in nature have made Lao-tzu perhaps the most influential Chinese thinker after Confucius. Native in its references, the *Tao Te Ching* is universal in its insights:

> Once the Way is lost,
> Then comes virtue;

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> Virtue lost, then comes compassion;
> After that, morality;
> And when that's lost, there's etiquette,
> The husk of all faith,
> The rising point of anarchy.

Composed in Sanskrit by the poet Valmiki in the 4th century B.C., the ***Ramayana*** is India's *Iliad*. It is 24,000 stanzas long, but the novelist R. K. Narayan has a fine condensation. The *Ramayana* is the story of the amorous courtship of Prince Rama, the abduction of his wife Sita by the monster Ravana, and Rama's mystical pursuit of the demon across a continent of deities, spells, and strange beasts, culminating in a final battle between the avenging prince and his concupiscent adversary. The work abounds with sensuous images—a stream scours the mountain "verily like a woman of pleasure gently detaches the valuables from her patron during her caresses." Viewed by some Indians as carrying scriptural authority, the *Ramayana* is ultimately about the timeless struggle between authority and usurpation, between fidelity and profligacy, between good and evil.

The holy text of the Moslem religion, accepted as the word of Allah communicated to the prophet Mohammed in the 7th century A.D., the **Koran** is at once sublime and terrifying to the Western reader. This Moslem scripture has much in common with the Judeo-Christian tradition out of which it sprang—like the Old Testament, it is a rich combination of commonsense advice, history, moral instruction, and divine law. The Koran outlines a vision of human dignity, self-discipline, and charity that has

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greatly improved the lives of many of its followers. While the cruel and the heartless will be punished, the Koran promises: "Those who have faith and do good works will be rewarded by gardens watered by running streams." At the same time, its teachings regarding male superiority and authority over women, polygamy, and criminal deterrence ("As for the man or woman who is guilty of theft, cut off their hands, for this is the punishment enjoined by Allah") will be difficult for many Westerners to embrace. The Koran does not distinguish between religious and political activity; it calls for Moslem domination and limited rights for others, and it urges a *jihad* or holy war against non-Islamic states to bring them under the rule of Allah.

The ***Ruba'iyat*** of Omar Khayyam is an 11th-century collection of short stanzas, compiled by the Persian philosopher-poet, which outlines an Epicurean vision celebrating the pleasures of the here-and-now with subtle irony. It is the consummation of the verse form, the ruba'i or two-line poem, that was developed by relatively free-thinking Persian poets who were often in rebellion against religious dogmatism. Even those who reject the *carpe diem* ("seize the day") attitude of the *Ruba'iyat* must confront its philosophy of fatalism and its enduring human temptation, especially in the tantalizing verses of Khayyam:

> Drink wine since for our destruction
> The firmament has got its eye on our precious souls
> Sit where it is green and enjoy the sparkling liquor
> Because this grass will grow nicely from your dust and mine.

Lady Shikibu Murasaki's ***Tale of Genji***, composed during the 11th century A.D., is a vivid and opulent account of Japanese life at court. Murasaki served as an aide to the empress Akiko, who reportedly enforced a stern regimen of chastity amongst her normally flirtatious maids. Murasaki camouflaged her learning in Chinese and Japanese language, as well as history, because she knew that such knowledge was considered inappropriate for a woman. This breadth of erudition, as well as a fluent style, are evident in *Tale of Genji*, however, in which Murasaki herself is a character—the second wife of Prince Genji. The work was well known in court circles during her time, and the Japanese emperor upon reading it was amazed at Murasaki's understanding of Japanese imperial history and convention. *Tale of Genji* provides the patient student (it is a lengthy novel in six parts) with a rare vista of the complex norms of 11th-century Japan.

Rabindranath Tagore's ***Gitanjali***, written in Bengali in the early 20th century, consists of a series of poetic meditations on life and nature. In many high schools in Asia, one of its poems is offered as a daily prayer:

> Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
> Where knowledge is free;
> Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
> Where words come out of the depth of truth;
> Where tireless striving stretches its arms toward perfection;
> Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
> Where the mind is led by Thee into ever-widening thought and action;
> Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

William Butler Yeats, who wrote the introduction to the English translation of the *Gitanjali*, said he discovered in Tagore a world that he had always dreamed about, but never encountered, either in reality or in imagination, in the West. "These verses," Yeats wrote,

The Koran outlines a vision of human dignity, self-discipline, and charity that has greatly improved the lives of many of its followers.

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"will not lie in little well-printed books upon ladies' tables, who turn the pages with indolent hands that they may sigh over a life without meaning...but, as the generations pass, travellers will hum them on the highway, and men rowing upon rivers. Lovers, while they await one another, shall find this love of God a magic gulf wherein their own more bitter passion may bathe and renew its youth." Somehow Tagore's spiritual eros managed to capture "a whole people, a whole civilization," and he did so grandly, nobly, without polemic.

The conflict between the old tribal ways of Africa and the new forces of colonialism and Christianity are portrayed in Chinua Achebe's 1958 novel ***Things Fall Apart***. The novel dramatizes change through the life of a bellicose tribesman of the Ibo tribe in Nigeria, who places such emphasis on physical strength that he regards all men weaker than himself as "women." Achebe's novel tragically recounts the destruction of thousand-year-old indigenous traditions as a result of alien invasion; yet at the same time he describes the less attractive features of those traditions, including brutal internecine warfare among the tribes (the protagonist Okonkwo drinks wine from the skulls of rival tribesmen he has killed), wife-beating, the consultation of oracles leading to bloodshed, and superstitious refusals to bury those who die from disease.

When an African convert to Christianity defiles the old religious symbols of the tribe, Okonkwo proposes to "take a stick and break his head." But the other elders prevail with a strategy of resignation. "If a man kills the sacred python in the secrecy of his hut, the matter lies between him and the god. We did not see it. If we put ourselves between the god and his victim, we may receive the blows intended for the offender." *Things Fall Apart* was written with such economy, honesty, and moral seriousness that it has been compared to the classics of Greek tragedy.

Naguib Mahfouz's ***The Thief and the Dogs***, published in 1961, captures the social texture of middle-class Egyptian life as well as any of Mahfouz's extensive corpus of

India's Iliad, the *Ramayana*, is ultimately about the timeless struggle between authority and usurpation, fidelity and profligacy, good and evil.

work. When Mahfouz won the Nobel prize he was praised for being realistic and yet metaphorical, detailed and yet evocative. In the tradition of Flaubert and Dickens, Mahfouz is a masterful observer of the subtle interaction of foreign and indigenous influences in Cairo, and his

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A scene from Omar Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat:* A jug of wine, a loaf of bread, and thou beside me, singing in the wilderness.

novels reflect the rich social texture of urban life: its distracting exotica; its picaresque abandon; its social-climbing, kowtowing, and disguised corruption. *The Thief and the Dogs* is a narrative thriller, following the roguish exploits of the jewel robber Sai Mahran, his desperate attempts at revenge and love, his moral disguise of revolutionary ideals for his self-aggrandizing crimes, ultimately his effort to escape the police dogs without degrading himself to the level of an animal. Like Mahfouz's other works, *Wedding Song* and *The Beginning and the End*, this novel raises the veil on an often-concealed and often-misrepresented civilization that Westerners would do well to understand better.

The Labyrinth of Solitude, published in 1985 by the Mexican writer Octavio Paz, consists of two long meditations—the famous title piece and "The Other Mexico"—and other shorter articles, all exploring the moral and psychological identity of Mexico, partly in relation with colonial Spain and the United States. Paz, who won the 1990 Nobel prize for literature, is a novelist, poet, and social critic, and this book employs the diverse forms of flights of fancy, rhythm, and meter, as well as trenchant analysis and commentary. Politically Paz terms himself a "disillusioned leftist," and his work resonates with long-

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ing for peasant utopia, punctuated by a keen awareness of the follies that attend its implementation.

In the lead essay, "The Labyrinth of Solitude," first written in 1961, Paz defines the Mexican character as solitary, repressed, inscrutable, usually presenting itself behind social masks, occasionally breaking out with wanton indiscretion during a revolution or fiesta. "During these days the silent Mexican whistles, shouts, sings, shoots off fireworks, discharges his pistol into the air. He discharges his soul. The night is full of songs and loud cries. Nobody talks quietly. Hats fly in the air. Now and then, it is true, the happiness ends badly, in quarrels, insults, pistol shots, stabbings. But these too are part of the fiesta, for the Mexican does not seek amusement: he seeks escape from himself, to leap over the wall of solitude that confines him." In another extraordinary insight, Paz adds, "The North Americans are credulous, and we are believers. They love fairy tales and detective stories and we love myths and legends. We get drunk in order to confess. They get drunk in order to forget. North Americans consider the world to be something that can be perfected. We consider it to be something to be redeemed."

The great works of other civilizations, like those of our own, can broaden our minds and sharpen our thinking.

Love in the Time of Cholera, published in 1988, is one of Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez's baroque narratives, similar in style and genre to his better-known *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* The novel is a love story, but of no ordinary sort. Florentino Ariza is so consumed by the image of the beautiful but haughty Fermina Daza that he develops strange illnesses, somewhat like cholera. Daza, who is happily married to a distinguished physician, submits to no tawdry infidelities, with the result that Ariza's affections go unfulfilled and unrequited for more than half a century. Their reciprocal relationship begins when Ariza is 76 years old, an ancient troubadour. Garcia Marquez's story is enveloped in a rich Latin tapestry, revealing somber and dissolute priests, venal politicians, wenches for hire, long-suffering grandmothers, and a narrator simultaneously detached and yet involved, cosmopolitan and yet native.

Evidence of Garcia Marquez's political and aesthetic sensibilities comes from his sharp contrast between peasant mulattoes ("During the weekend they danced without mercy, drank themselves blind on home-brewed alcohol, made wild love among the icaco plants") and bourgeois Spanish ladies ("Indoors, in the cool bedrooms saturated with incense, women protected themselves from the sun as if it were a shameful infection....Their love affairs were slow and difficult and were often disturbed by sinister omens, and life seemed interminable"). But whatever the merits of its author's ideological convictions, *Love in the Time of Cholera* creates scenes, characters, and attitudes that North Americans will find bizarre, captivating, and vastly informative.

Careful Study

Other books could be added to this list, such as Ibn Khaldun's *Muqadimmah*, the autobiography of Al Ghazali, the Chinese drama *Three Kingdoms* by Lo Kuan-Chung, not to mention contemporary works such as Mario Vargas Llosa's *Against Wind and Tide*, V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*, the poetry of Jorge Luis Borges, the novels of Wole Soyinka. Any multicultural curriculum should explore the principles of Buddhism. There are also excellent editions of folklore, historical survey, and modern scholarly comment on the literature and philosophy of other cultures that merit study. Multicultural education is too important to leave to the current ideological biases of those who administer such programs. Through a careful study of the contrasting principles embodied in Western and non-Western cultures, American students may find stronger rational and moral grounds for adopting the norms of other civilizations, or for affirming their own. ☎

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Land of Milk and Money

Governor Tommy Thompson's Wisconsin Showcase

An Interview by Adam Meyerson

One of the ironies of modern politics is that the state of Wisconsin, earlier this century the shrine of Progressivism, is today the showcase of conservative policy ideas. Under Republican Governor Tommy Thompson, Wisconsin has combined economic dynamism with a boldly experimental approach to education and welfare reform. Wisconsin is the only state in the nation whose welfare rolls declined last year. And while public school choice is sweeping many states, Wisconsin, with a pilot program in Milwaukee, is a pioneer in offering vouchers that students can use at private as well as public schools.

Thompson's policies seem to be popular. A conservative Republican in a state with a strong liberal tradition, Thompson last November was reelected to his second four-year term with 58 percent of the vote. He carried 67 of 72 counties, and picked up 25 percent of the black vote. Thompson has also attracted attention through his unusual coalition on school vouchers with State Representative Polly Williams, who was Jesse Jackson's state chairman and has close ties with militant black separatists in Milwaukee.

Thompson was interviewed in January 1991 in his Madison office by *Policy Review* editor Adam Meyerson.

Policy Review: **With unemployment at slightly over 4 percent, a relatively untroubled real estate market and banking system, and a boom in industrial exports, Wisconsin has recently enjoyed one of the strongest state economies in the nation; and, like most of the Midwest, your state has so far been less affected by recession than other sections of the country. What changes in national economic policy have contributed most to the turnaround of the Wisconsin economy? What changes in state policy have been most important?**

Thompson: The most helpful change in national policy has been the declining value of the dollar. We're one of nine states now that have a trade surplus of at least a half billion dollars. A lower dollar helped our export industries be more competitive.

The most important changes for Wisconsin, though, have been in state policy. We've gone from a business-bashing state to a very friendly place to do business. I ran for governor on a pro-business platform—against the advice of people who said you can't win in Wisconsin doing that. And I twice proved them wrong.

One of my main priorities has been to make our tax structure more competitive. We've reduced income taxes so we're no longer in the top 10. We've reduced corporation taxes. We're one of only seven states with a 60 percent exemption for capital gains taxes. We're phasing out the inheritance tax. We've cut the unemployment compensation tax three times, and now have a $1.2 billion surplus in our unemployment compensation fund. We have one of the lowest workers' compensation rates in the country.

Another change has been a more aggressive effort to sell Wisconsin as a good place to do business. I spend a lot of my time pounding on business doors, often flying out of state, to try to convince companies with expansion plans that they should locate in Wisconsin.

P.R.: **How have tax cuts benefitted your economy?**

Thompson: Lower taxes make it more profitable for businesses to locate and expand their operations here. They also have an important effect on perceptions of business climate. I find it significant that the new governors of Minnesota and Michigan, Arne Carlson and John Engler, both publicly said they couldn't raise taxes in their states or they would risk losing more businesses and more jobs to Wisconsin.

Our 60 percent exemption for capital gains has been a very good selling point in attracting business. In fact, based on our experience, I would strongly recommend cutting capital gains taxes at the national level. Keeping down taxes on capital gains encourages entrepreneurs to take risks. It gives them the incentive to invest, to expand their operations, and in the process put more people to work. A cut in these taxes is not a break for the rich. It's an inducement for growth and ingenuity.

Our phaseout of inheritance taxes has been especially important. For many years, we suffered a terrible drain as people who really energized the state, the movers and the shakers, were leaving Wisconsin to go to the Sunbelt

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because of our high inheritance taxes. We were losing both their money and their talents. Phasing out these taxes has turned this around.

***P.R.:* Wisconsin is one of the few states east of the Mississippi not to confront a serious budget deficit this year. Do you attribute your good fortune mostly to economic growth in the state, or to restrictions on state spending?**

Thompson: Both. But you can't have economic growth without restrictions on spending.

I used the line-item veto over 600 times in my first four years, and was able to cut over $200 million in spending. Without those cuts, we would now face a deficit. It has helped me that Wisconsin gives its governor the strongest line-item veto power of any state in the nation. I not only can reduce the spending level for any line item, I can even change some of the wording of legislation as I sign it.

As I use my veto power, I ask four questions about every program. Will this program work? Is it needed? Can we run it a different way to make it more efficient? And can we afford it, given our current financial situation, which I track monthly? If we can't afford it this month or year, then we can wait.

***P.R.:* New England and Middle Atlantic states are now suffering the kinds of economic problems that seven or eight years ago were associated with Wisconsin and other "Rust Belt" states. What advice would you give their governors about preparing their states for recovery?**

Thompson: You have to be able to communicate to the business community that the state is going to be their partner instead of their enemy. When I look at Massachusetts, New York, and other Northeastern states that continue to spend and tax, I can understand why many businesses feel they have to take on not only their local, national, and global competitors, but also their state governments. That attitude has to change.

"Based on our experience, I would strongly recommend cutting capital gains taxes at the national level."

The governors also have to get involved in international trade. This is where the future growth is. We can no longer sit back in Wisconsin or Minnesota or Massachusetts and hope that we'll be able to create enough markets in our respective states and regions to be able to compete. We have to be able to compete globally with companies from the Far East and the European Community. And that requires governors travelling overseas, and getting business executives to travel with them, to make sure we make the most of export markets.

***P.R.:* Do last year's federal tax increases make life more difficult for you and other governors?**

Thompson: They hurt the overall economy, but otherwise don't have a direct effect on the states. A greater difficulty comes from the unfunded spending mandates imposed by Congress. Thanks to a requirement by Congress, Wisconsin has had to spend over $100 million more on Medicaid for the last two years than we needed to. That's more than $100 million that we have had to take away from programs to help the poor, or minorities, or even other ways to help the medically needy.

Unfunded mandates stifle initiative and experimentation in the states, our most important laboratories of democracy. Spending $100 million more on Medicaid may not be what Wisconsin or Michigan or Georgia needs. But they decide in their infinite wisdom, out there on the Potomac River, that they know best. They take the credit for the grandiose bills they pass, and we end up having to pick up the tab.

***P.R.:* While parental choice in public schools is sweeping the nation, Wisconsin has been a pioneer in experimenting with vouchers that parents can take to private schools. Can you explain how you formed your coalition with State Representative Polly Williams that led to a voucher program for low-income Milwaukee families?**

Thompson: The most important way to make schools work better is to get parents more involved in their children's education. After all, if parents aren't interested in their children's education, why would the children be interested? I see choice as a way to stimulate more parental involvement and attention.

In my 1988 annual budget, I introduced a parental choice proposal that would have provided vouchers to both sectarian and nonsectarian private schools in Milwaukee. The legislature wouldn't even consider it, so I realized that I was too ambitious and was scaring too many people off.

Meanwhile, Polly Williams and other minority leaders in Milwaukee were proposing a separate black school district in their city. They weren't able to get their proposal through the legislature either. So I met with them, and suggested that they think about choice as a way of achieving their objectives—better schools for their children. We agreed to push for a pilot program for 1,000 students in nonsectarian private schools in the central city of Milwaukee. We needed a Democrat to push for the proposal in our legislature, and Polly Williams became principal sponsor and chief spokesman. The Assembly Minority Leader, Betty Jo Nelsen, a Republican who is now an official in President Bush's Department of Agriculture, rounded up support from our party. Through this unusual coalition of Republicans and inner-city Democrats, we got our pilot program through the legislature.

The families in the program like it. Former Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos visited the independent

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schools and said he couldn't believe how well-adjusted and interested the students were. Vice President Quayle had the same reaction.

One thing I like about the program is that parents have to spend time in the schools. They either have to serve on a committee, or they have to come in and work with the students, including their own children. The parents are happier because they have a real choice of improving the education quality for their children. And the end product, I think, is going to show academic improvement for students who took advantage of this experiment.

***P.R.:* As Jesse Jackson's state chairman in Wisconsin, and as a woman with strong connections to militant black separatists in Milwaukee, Polly Williams has been an unusual coalition partner for a conservative Republican governor. What are the prospects for conservatives to form similar coalitions in other states?**

Thompson: The prospect for such coalitions is good. What conservatives first have to do is find people who are dissatisfied with the status quo and are willing to talk about radical reform. Then, even if they come out of a political tradition that is not conservative, you explore whether they can meet some of their objectives through conservative ideas.

Polly Williams was so frustrated with the public school system in Milwaukee that she was willing to try anything different. The choice program doesn't go as far as she wants with a separate black district, but she was willing to try it. And unlike the education establishment and the liberal Democrats who were fighting her all the way, we put together a coalition of Republicans and moderate Democrats and independents who wanted to try something new to see if it would work.

There are a lot of people in other states and other communities who really want to change the educational scene. They don't know how to do it, and they don't know whom to talk with. Choice has given us a good sounding board, an issue to talk about and form a relationship that we might be able to build on.

Wisconsin was the only state in the country whose welfare rolls went down last year.

I've made it clear that I don't agree with all of Polly Williams' positions. And she has been less supportive of my welfare reforms than of my education reforms. But I'm glad that we've been able to work together to improve schools for Milwaukee children.

***P.R.:* Did you have problems with your Republican or conservative supporters as a result of dealing with someone from Williams' background?**

Thompson: "Barry Goldwater got me involved in politics. In my heart I still know he's right."

Thompson: Absolutely not. I spend a lot of time talking with people in the central city, in the labor halls, asking them how they would solve problems. I hear a lot of good ideas. And Republicans appreciate that this approach has paid off at election time. I'm the first Republican to carry Milwaukee County since 1946. I carried 67 of 72 counties last year, and won 25 percent of the black vote as a conservative Republican. So when Republicans saw that my approach was successful, instead of opposing me, they've joined me.

***P.R.:* How attractive are public school choice and vouchers to politicians looking to build political support? For example, Governor Perpich's championing of choice did not win him reelection in Minnesota.**

Thompson: The politician who supports choice or vouchers has to be willing to buck one of the most powerful special interests in our society. The teachers' unions have so much influence on state legislative elections that they have been able to paralyze and suffocate almost every effort at educational reform.

There is a great deal of support for choice from individual citizens, but the educational community is definitely opposed. The teachers are opposed, the superintendents are opposed, the principals are opposed, the school boards are opposed. These special interest groups like the status quo, and don't want to see anybody rock the boat. This makes it very difficult for politicians to

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stand up and take a position on educational issues.

The greatest support for choice will come from individual citizens, especially poor black parents, who are locked into a mediocre system. You make your headway with people who say, "We want to improve our school system, and choice gives us an avenue to do that, an avenue to deliver better educational quality to our children."

***P.R.:* Do you think school choice played a big part in your reelection?**

Thompson: No. My support for school choice helped me in the minority community, but that's only about 5 percent of our population. It didn't hurt me. Overall I don't think it had a tremendous impact on whether I won or lost. The state of the economy was probably much more important.

***P.R.:* In welfare, as in education, Wisconsin stands out as one of the nation's most interesting laboratories for policy experimentation. How did you prepare the political groundwork for your Learnfare experiment, under which parents whose teen-age children are persistently absent from school lose some of their welfare benefits?**

Thompson: I pushed for Learnfare as a way to keep teen-agers in school and a way to make welfare recipients more responsible parents. We know that school dropouts stand a 50-percent better chance of ending up on welfare than those with a high school education. It is simple common sense to hold welfare recipients accountable for their kids going to school.

The major opposition has come from the more liberal legislators from Madison and Milwaukee. They think it's unfair to penalize the rest of the family because Johnny or Suzie doesn't want to go to school. My answer is that it is the parents' responsibility to get Johnny and Suzie to school, and that they should lose some of their benefits if they don't live up to their obligation. I call the policy "tough love," and it works. The parents feel more responsible and accountable. More of the children stay in school. Hopefully they will get a high school or vocational education, and then go on to further their training at the university or on the job.

"To form coalitions like mine with Polly Williams, conservatives have to find people who are dissatisfied with the status quo and are willing to talk about radical reform."

***P.R.:* Wisconsin was the only state in the country whose welfare rolls went down last year—and indeed, welfare rolls in the state have fallen by over 60,000 over the past four years. Do you attribute this falling caseload primarily to the booming economy, or to the changes you've made in your welfare system?**

Thompson: Both. Obviously the economy is important, and this year as our economy is slowing down a little, our welfare rolls are starting to stabilize. But we're also the leading state for welfare reform. In addition to Learnfare, we have a work experience and job training program that gives welfare recipients the skills necessary to enter the work force, and has become a national model.

To fund some of these pilot programs, I reduced the level of AFDC payments by 6 percent. They were way out of line with other states. Wisconsin was paying 40 percent more than what the same family would receive in Illinois. We're still seeing an in-migration of welfare families into Wisconsin, but not nearly as many as before I was elected governor.

Wisconsin's welfare reform will continue into my second term. We've been granted a federal waiver from a rule that prohibits the head of a family on welfare from working more than 100 hours a month. My budget also includes initiatives to encourage fathers to become financially and emotionally involved in their children's lives.

As it now stands, the federal welfare system discourages teen-age parents from marrying. If teen-age parents want to get married, but neither has work experience, the entire family is ineligible for AFDC. That's ridiculous. Wisconsin will seek a federal waiver to remove this barrier.

My budget also contains a provision that would require unmarried minor mothers to live at home or in an adult-supervised setting. Too often we see 14- and 15-year-olds, still children themselves, attempting to raise their babies without guidance. This proposal brings those young parents back into a family setting so they can learn how to be parents.

I want Wisconsin's welfare system to be more of a transition from public assistance to the work force. That's why I have proposed capping the AFDC cash benefit for each family. If the family has another child, additional medical assistance and food stamps would be provided, but the cash grant would not increase. In the working world, families don't receive raises because they have additional children; salaries go up when you put in more hours at work and you're more productive.

Another program that promotes responsibility is the Children First program. This program requires that noncustodial fathers pay their court-ordered child support or participate in our Community Work Experience Program. Children First has worked well as a pilot project in two counties, and I want to expand it statewide.

Additionally I want to expand the Learnfare program to include children ages 6 to 12. There is no reason for a six-year-old to skip school. We should try to instill the

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value of education and foster the good habit of attending school in young children so that problems can be avoided when they become teen-agers.

P.R.: **Wisconsin was at the forefront of Progressivism earlier this century. Do you consider your welfare and education reforms to be consistent with, or in opposition to, the spirit of La Follette and other Wisconsin Progressives from the 1910s and 1920s?**

Thompson: The Progressive movement was essentially a middle-class movement to make government work. I think our state's middle class today believes our welfare and education reforms are working.

I consider myself a pragmatic conservative who wants to solve problems. I looked at the welfare rolls and saw that we weren't encouraging people to work or stay in school. I came up with Learnfare and Workfare in order to solve those problems. I wanted to improve educational quality in the central city, so I came up with a choice program. I think that's being pragmatic and coming up with commonsense solutions to urgent problems.

P.R.: **Milwaukee, like many American cities, has been seeing a major crime wave, especially for homicide. What do you think are the major reasons for this crime wave—are we seeing primarily a cultural or spiritual crisis? And what are the most important functions government can play in protecting its citizens?**

Thompson: Unemployment is high in the central city, and joblessness leads to drugs and crime. We need to rebuild the institutions that hold our neighborhoods together and reinforce values—community groups, small businesses, and schools. We need to stimulate the economy in the central city, and attract more businesses there. This is why I have been a strong proponent of enterprise zones and of minority business programs. Over the long run I think our welfare and education reforms will lower crime figures. But right now we have to address crime by increasing penalties for criminals.

P.R.: **You've been chairman of the National Governors Association's committee on international trade. Are you worried by the growth of protectionism here and abroad?**

Thompson: You cannot develop a country or a state based upon protectionism. You have to be able to trade freely and fairly. You have to be willing to get involved in the international marketplace or you're not going to survive, either as a state, as a business, or as a country. And those people who think that they're going to be able to turn back the calendar and go back to the "good old days" by developing protectionist rules and tariffs are sadly mistaken.

I have been a strong supporter of a free-trade agreement with Mexico, and in fact I suggested one to President Salinas when I met with him in his office in November 1989. He told me that the politics were not correct at that time to consider it, but shortly afterwards he and President Bush issued a joint statement calling for such an agreement.

I was deeply involved in the free-trade agreement with Canada. Now I'd like to see a North American free-trade agreement, with Canada, Mexico, and the United States all joining together. We have to be able to compete with the European Community. One of the best ways is to have a North American trade bloc in place by 1992.

"The teachers' unions have so much influence on state legislative elections that they have been able to paralyze almost every educational reform."

P.R.: **What do you see as the most important goals of foreign policy in the post-Cold War period?**

Thompson: After the Middle East crisis, the most important thing that the Congress and the president can do for future generations is to encourage the free-enterprise system and a fair and free-trade atmosphere in as many countries as possible, especially in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Fair and free trade is the best way to stimulate world peace. Trade opens opportunities not only to expand your businesses, but to learn from each other and to expand your cultures.

P.R.: **Who are your political heroes?**

Thompson: Barry Goldwater got me involved in politics. In my heart I still know he's right. He was cantankerous, but he was direct. He told you exactly what he thought. I try to pattern myself after him in that way.

Abraham Lincoln saved the Union, and started the Republican Party. He had a patriotic spirit, a belief in his country, that was second to none. He believed in the unity of his country and the need to maintain its strength.

My father was just a county board supervisor, but he had more common sense than just about everybody I've ever met. He used to tell me, "Tommy, you have two ears and one mouth. Use them in that proportion and you'll get along just fine."

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The Line in the Sand

What George Bush Learned from Winston Churchill

Robert Kaufman

In his decisive response to Iraqi aggression in Kuwait, President George Bush followed the principles of the greatest conservative statesman and philosopher of foreign policy in the 20th century, Winston Churchill. Like Churchill, the president defined the national interest both morally and geopolitically. While championing democracy, he made allies with undemocratic states in order to defeat the greater evil. While seeking peace, he was willing to confront an aggressive tyrant if necessary by overwhelming military power. Above all, he subscribed, like Churchill, to Machiavelli's maxim that the art of statesmanship is to act decisively when the disease is difficult to detect but easy to cure, rather than to wait until the disease is easy to detect but the cure is difficult or prohibitive. "Counsels of prudence and restraint may become the prime elements of mortal danger," wrote Churchill. "The middle course adopted from desires for safety and a quiet life may be found to lead directly to the bull's eye of disaster."

Nothing better illustrates Churchill's vision of foreign affairs and its enduring importance than a reexamination of the policies he advocated to deal with the three gravest security crises that the democracies faced in the 20th century: the Imperial German threat, which culminated in World War I; the Nazi threat, which culminated in World War II; and the Soviet threat, which culminated in the Cold War. History has vindicated Churchill's courage, strategy, and tactics for all three.

Kaiser Role

Debate continues on the origins of World War I and the lessons it produced. Revisionist historians argue that misperception, miscalculation, and mistake brought about a war that nobody wanted and that the United States had no vital interest in fighting. Mainstream historiography has sustained, however, Churchill's conventional, and more compelling view: If none of the major powers escape some culpability, then Germany willed the First World War in a way that others did not. Imperial Germany was more than just another nation-state seeking to maintain its national interest. From the late 1890s on, it was a militarist, dissatisfied, and expansionist power, seeking to dominate Europe and to challenge Great Britain's naval supremacy. Germany's bellicose ambitions made war on the Allies' part both inevitable and necessary to preserve a tolerable balance of power. Great Britain's culpability for Churchill lay in its excessive reluctance, not eagerness, to fight.

The Kaiser's Schlieffen Plan, the essentials of which the major powers knew for nearly a decade before 1914, called for Germany, facing the prospect of a two-front war, first to deliver a knockout blow to France by attacking through Belgium, then to dispose of Russia in the East. To deny this plan's plausibility was perhaps the only way to deter Germany in its reckless bid for continental mastery. This is precisely the course Churchill advocated. Though Churchill initially took a benign view of Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany, the Second Moroccan Crisis of 1911 transformed him inalterably from a dove to a hawk as he reappraised his assessment of German intentions. Henceforth, he supported vigorously the Admiralty's battleship program and the creation of a large well-trained army that could come quickly to France's aid on the Western Front in the event of a German attack.

When war came in August 1914, a coherent set of moral and practical principles ran through Churchill's analysis. Geopolitically, Great Britain could not tolerate an authoritarian and militaristic Germany dominating the European continent, because such an entity would have the resources and perhaps the inclination to subjugate Great Britain. Balance of power considerations thus dictated allying even with Czarist Russia (an autocracy even more repressive than Wilhelmite Germany) because the latter represented the greater present physical danger to Great Britain.

Despite endorsing moral compromises to ensure Britain's self-interest, Churchill's proposed course was not devoid of moral content. Not all of Great Britain's allies were democracies; but all major democracies eventually became Great Britain's allies. The victory of Wilhelm's Germany would have menaced not only Britain's physical security, but the ideals of freedom

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Drawing by Alexander Hunter for *Policy Review*

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Unlike FDR, Churchill attempted to gear Anglo–American strategy not just to defeating Hitler, but to minimizing Stalin's influence in the postwar world.

Britain represented. Churchill thus conceived of the problem of Wilhelmite Germany within the context of choosing the lesser geopolitical and moral evils: Ensuring Great Britain's interests and free institutions was worth the cost of enlisting morally dubious but immediately less dangerous regimes in the endeavor. The possibility of deterring war, and when deterrence failed, winning with less cost, was worth the short-term political and material sacrifices of greater military preparedness and decisive action.

Magnanimity Toward Weimar

For Churchill, however, winning the war was not an end in itself, but a means to a larger end. His primary concern was to create an imbalance of power, in favor of the forces of moderation, that could provide the basis for a lasting peace. Throughout the 1920s, he urged a policy of magnanimity toward Weimar Germany in an effort to reconcile it with the Western democratic powers—a policy he advocated with similar foresight and happier results toward the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War. He considered the financial clauses of the Treaty of Versailles frivolous and silly. He stressed the importance of democratic institutions as a moderating force on German ambitions. At the same time, Churchill worried that the Allies' imposition of the Weimar government had fatally discredited the republic in the eyes of the German people, who erroneously blamed liberals rather than generals for their catastrophic defeat—a myth that German generals mendaciously perpetrated and Adolf Hitler diabolically exploited.

Churchill also lamented the breakup of the Hapsburg Empire, a victim of President Wilson's well-intentioned but misbegotten obsession with the principle of national self-determination, which created more problems than it solved. Whereas the empire had provided relatively high degrees of prosperity and liberty for a large number of disparate peoples, the successor states of Eastern Europe proved too poor, too weak, and too fractious to stand up against either a renewed German or Soviet threat.

"A Typhoid Bacillus"

Churchill feared even more the consequences of the Bolshevik Revolution, "the poison peril of the East." He considered Lenin "a typhoid bacillus," and Communism an ideology that would lead to the "worst, most destructive, and most degrading tyranny in history." His vehement opposition to totalitarianism stemmed from a profound insight that extreme realists miss because they minimize the effect of ideology and domestic structure on the foreign policy of states. A society waging war on its citizens will wage war, directly or indirectly, on the world.

In 1919, he pressed unsuccessfully for the dispatch of the British army to help the White Russian forces to defeat the Bolsheviks. As a defender of freedom and justice as well as Great Britain's self-interest, he proposed the establishment of a social-democratic regime in Moscow, not the restoration of the czar. Sadly, the government of Lloyd George rejected his advice, which increased immensely the costs and risks of taming Communism over the long run. Nevertheless, Europe would enjoy a short-lived respite from the Soviet danger as the regime strove to recover from its brutal civil war and the bloody terror the regime unleashed against its own population.

"The Follies of the Victors"

Meanwhile, Churchill also had grave doubts about the League of Nations as President Wilson envisaged it. Whereas Wilson advocated a full-fledged collective security system including all powers and guaranteeing all frontiers, Churchill had a more modest, but practicable, conception. Procedurally, Churchill believed in joining power with responsibility. The major powers should have a greater say in the decisions rather than having the League giving all powers, great or small, one vote and requiring unanimity of voting. Practically, he hoped for the League to serve mainly as an alliance among the victorious democracies—Great Britain, the United States, and France—to prevent German rearmament until a reconciliation with Germany could be made.

From the Armistice on, Churchill sought relentlessly to involve the United States in maintaining the European and world balance of power. His motives reflected the same combination of ideals and self-interest running through his other policies. Cultural affinities, shared democratic institutions, and a common commitment to liberty and freedom reinforced and complemented Anglo–American concrete interests. For Churchill, the Senate's repudiation of the League and America's retreat into isolationism inflicted a severe geopolitical and moral blow to the Versailles Treaty by leaving a gravely weakened Britain and France to maintain the peace. It also crippled the League of Nations, which otherwise might have used concerted force to stop Hitler's rearmament and spare the world "further bloodshed."

Yet despite the defects of the Treaty of Versailles and the defection of the United States from the League, Churchill believed that strong and preemptive action on the part of the democracies could have averted the Second World War. "There was no moment in these 16 years when...even Great Britain and France with their

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associates in Europe, could not in the League of Nations and under its moral and international shield, have controlled by mere effort of will the armed strength of Germany...the strict enforcement until 1934 of the disarmament clauses of the Peace Treaty would have guarded indefinitely, without violence or bloodshed, the peace and safety of mankind....The crimes of the vanquished find their backgrounds and their explanation, though not of course their pardon, in the follies of the victors. Without these follies crimes would have found neither temptation nor opportunity."

"Floodgates of Evil"

In 1933, soon after Hitler had taken power, Churchill warned about the malignancy of the Nazi regime, which "opened the floodgates of evil upon German, and perhaps upon European, civilization." Nazi foreign policy was tactically flexible, but strategically faithful to the totalitarian and genocidal principles Hitler formulated in *Mein Kampf*. With such a regime, Churchill realized that there could be no compromise.

The issue for Churchill was not whether to fight Germany, but when—war sooner or war later? He saw military power and the willingness to use it as the keys to Great Britain's survival and freedom. Correctly, he calculated that fighting Hitler sooner would save much bloodshed, treasure, and the adverse consequences of having to rely on unsavory allies later. When Hitler publicly repudiated the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty during 1934, France alone could have crushed the Nazis without major bloodshed. When Hitler violated the Treaties of Versailles and Locarno by marching into the Rhineland in 1936, France alone, certainly France and Great Britain together, could have crushed the Nazis without the cost or risk of a major war. According to the historian Williamson Murray, in *Europe and the Changing Balance of Power, 1938–1939*, the results of a war in the fall of 1938 over Czechoslovakia would have been costly, but "would have led to the eventual collapse of the Nazi regime at considerably less cost than the war that broke out the following September." Churchill pressed for decisive action to stop Hitler in each of these instances, but to no avail.

He sought, simultaneously, to strengthen Great Britain in anticipation of an inevitable war by urging for massive rearmament, bolstering the national will to fight, and enlisting allies. His alliance strategy warrants further discussion as an example of his judicious calibration of relative moral and geopolitical evil. His staunch advocacy of Britain banding together with France, the United States, and other democracies involved no trade-off between his ideals and self-interest. His advocacy of Britain banding with Italy before Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia and with the Soviet Union involved, however, painful trade-offs.

In the case of Italy, Churchill prepared to overlook Mussolini's Fascist ideology and even his invasion of Abyssinia, because Italy's support would strengthen the coalition arrayed against Hitler, the greater moral and geopolitical evil. Similarly, Churchill even prepared to swallow an alliance with Stalin, a leader of a regime that he considered as odious as Nazi Germany, because Hitler represented the greater present danger.

Note, too, that Churchill, the interventionist, did not support unconditional intervention any time or any place. For example, he considered Great Britain's stake in the outcome of the Spanish civil war too limited, the relative morality of the two opposing sides too ambiguous, to justify active British support of either the Nationalists or the Republicans.

A Lonely Voice

Unfortunately, Churchill spent the 1930s a lone, but courageous, voice in the wilderness. Most Western leaders and their electorates shared the outlook of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, whose policies of appeasement flowed logically from his fallacious premises about the causes of war, the conditions of peace, and the nature of the German threat. Like many Anglo–American liberals, Chamberlain believed that war was fundamentally irrational, that Hitler's grievances were finite and limited, that a policy of concessions could satisfy those demands, that neither the dictatorships nor the democracies wanted war. He believed, conversely, that alliances and military preparedness did not deter, but caused, war. Above all, he feared a recurrence of the cycle of arms building, alliances, and miscalculation that, in his view, had brought about World War I. He also sympathized, like many of his countrymen, with Hitler's claim that the Treaty of Versailles had treated Germany unfairly. A growing sense of Great Britain's strategic weakness and lack of national will also contributed to Chamberlain's enthusiastic embrace of appeasement. His argument ran that given Great Britain's limited economic strength, military weakness, and pacific public opinion, appeasement was a necessity.

In 1919 Churchill proposed sending the British army to Russia, to replace the Bolsheviks by a democratic government. The Cold War could have ended 70 years earlier.

Chamberlain and his predecessor, Stanley Baldwin, opposed Churchill's policies because they considered them undesirable rather than impossible. Chamberlain particularly remained reluctant to abandon appeasement or accelerate the modest pace of rearmament even after public opinion had shifted. Nor does his economic justification for appeasement stand up in the final analysis. It cost Great Britain far more to fight unprepared in 1940 than it would have under massive

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Would waiting for sanctions to work preclude the option to fight, or increase the costs prohibitively? Churchill would have answered these questions the way President Bush did: war sooner.

rearmament and strong action of the type Churchill urged earlier.

Indomitable Courage

The Nazi seizure of Prague in March 1939 finally disabused even Chamberlain. By extending a security guarantee to Poland, he ended the policy of appeasement, "a decision," Churchill wrote, "taken at the worst possible moment, and on the least satisfactory ground, which must surely lead to the slaughter of tens of millions of people":

> Look and see what we have successively accepted and thrown away: a Germany disarmed by solemn treaty;...the Rhineland;...Czechoslovakia deserted and ruined by the Munich Pact...its fortresses in German hands...its mighty arsenals making munitions for German armies...the Soviet Union's willingness to join the Western Powers... ignored...all...thrown away.

Churchill was right. The German invasion of Poland in September 1939 unleashed a devastating world war that the French lost and the British could not have won alone. The war resulted in a loss of life and treasure much greater than the cost of what Churchill had advocated earlier. It also let the Soviet Union into the heart of Central Europe—something that strong preemptive action against Hitler could have averted or minimized and something British appeasers and American isolationists alike ostensibly wished to prevent.

That the Allies won the war and the democracies did not totally lose the peace owes largely to Churchill's heroism and foresight. His stirring rhetoric and relentless warnings prodded the Chamberlain government's belated and begrudging increase in defense spending during the late 1930s, as well as its development of radar: both helped to save Great Britain and the cause of freedom generally between May 1940 and June 1941, when the British carried on the fight against Hitler alone. His indomitable courage and eloquence inspired the British people to make the necessary sacrifices to hold on against daunting odds, until events brought the Soviet Union and the United States into the war.

Pact with the Devil

After the fall of France in June 1940, Churchill's paramount objective was to ensure Great Britain's survival, a necessary if not sufficient condition for realizing its ideals and self-interest. He knew well that Britain could not defeat Germany without help from both the Soviet Union and the United States. When Germany attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Churchill therefore welcomed the Soviets as an ally. Without illusion, Churchill recognized not only the moral repugnance of the Soviet regime, but the long-term danger it posed for the West. He also took due regard of the ignominious aid that Stalin had rendered Hitler to

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destroy England, which continued right up until the Nazi attack. For Churchill, however, the Soviets represented a lesser present physical danger than the Nazis. Nor did Great Britain, circa 1941, have the luxury of spurning the Soviets. "If Hitler had invaded hell," Churchill quipped explaining the alliance with Stalin, "then I would at least make a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons."

He had no doubt that Stalin was the devil. Accordingly, he envisaged collaboration with the Soviet Union merely as a tactical arrangement, to last only while the war lasted and for the limited objective of defeating Hitler. He also feared that the Soviet Union would emerge from the war an adversary to the West as ruthless, insatiable, and morally repugnant as Hitler, and perhaps even more dangerous, because of the greater skill, patience, and sophistication of Soviet diplomacy. Once America's entry into the war made victory over the Nazis a foregone conclusion, Churchill attempted to gear Anglo–American strategy not just to the short-term objective of defeating Hitler, but the long-term objective of minimizing Soviet influence in the postwar world.

Churchill's realistic appraisal of Soviet intentions and his prophetic outlook contrasted starkly with Franklin Roosevelt's. There is some merit to the criticism that President Roosevelt's wartime diplomacy stemmed largely from his overly optimistic assessment of Stalin and the nature of the Soviet regime. Further, he did tend, as most Americans typically do, to take a short-term view, glamorizing our Soviet ally for its great material sacrifice in the bloody struggle on the Eastern Front. Thus, at Tehran and Yalta, heedless of Churchill's warnings, Roosevelt subordinated the fate of East Central Europe to his paramount goal of obtaining Soviet support for the creation of a United Nations, in which the Soviet Union would operate as one of the world's four great policemen. In particular, Roosevelt rejected Churchill's advice that the Allies press on as fast and as far as possible, to prevent Soviet troops from occupying much of Eastern Europe.

Architects of Containment

In the annals of democratic politics, one has difficulty finding an example of greater folly and ingratitude than the British electorate's decision in July 1945 to vote Churchill out of office on the threshold of World War II's victorious end. Undaunted, Churchill fought on, later to return to office vindicated by the West's belated decision to confront and contain vigilantly the Soviet threat. In the initial phase of the Cold War, 1945-1947, Churchill assumed his familiar role of rousing the democracies from their tranquility about the Soviet threat, a threat that he considered moral, geopolitical, and ideological. His "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri, in March 1946 marked a watershed in shifting American perceptions of the Soviet Union, the stakes involved in the Cold War, and the measures necessary to survive. His policy prescriptions, vision for the best practicable world order, hierarchy of priorities, and his morally inspired realism formed the basis of the Truman administration's policy of vigorous containment that has placed the United States and its allies on the verge of victory in the Cold War.

Churchill drew an important distinction between the Soviet and Nazi regimes, not morally or by the scale of their ambitions, but in their willingness to court risk and their capacity to be deterred. Whereas Churchill considered Hitler a man bent on war in a hurry, he did not consider a Third World War with the Soviet Union inevitable. Marxist ideology counseled prudence, caution, and tactical flexibility in pursuit of limitless objectives, predispositions that the traditional caution of czarist diplomacy reinforced. The advent of nuclear weapons, in Churchill's view, also precluded either side from the use of unconstrained force to achieve victory. In the short term, the West could contain further Soviet aggression, and in the long term, cause the collapse of the Soviet regime itself through military alliances, preparedness, and vigilant containment in geopolitically critical regions.

For this strategy to succeed, Churchill recognized that the United States would have to abandon its historic isolationism and assume the burden of alliances with European democracies and Japan, at the least. There was, indeed, no substitute for American power, with Europe prostrate and devastated by war. This sacrifice and exertion on America's part he justified with his familiar logic that doing more sooner would reap greater savings later: "A tithe of efforts now being made by America would have prevented the Second World War and would probably have led to the downfall of Hitler with scarcely any blood shed except his own. I feel deep gratitude toward our great American ally. They have risen to the leadership of the world without any ambition but to serve its high cause faithfully."

Churchill, the interventionist, did not support unconditional intervention any time or any place. Not in Spain or China, for instance.

Democratic Germany

Churchill's vision for a postwar world extended beyond the negative goal of containing Soviet power. For Western Europe, he advocated the positive goal of regional integration and cooperation with the United States, based on free trade and free-market principles. He envisaged the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the shield behind which Europe could recover, and he favored the Marshall Plan, the General Agreements on Tariff and Trade (GATT), and the International Monetary Fund.

He also pressed strongly for Franco–German reconciliation, and for West German reconciliation with the

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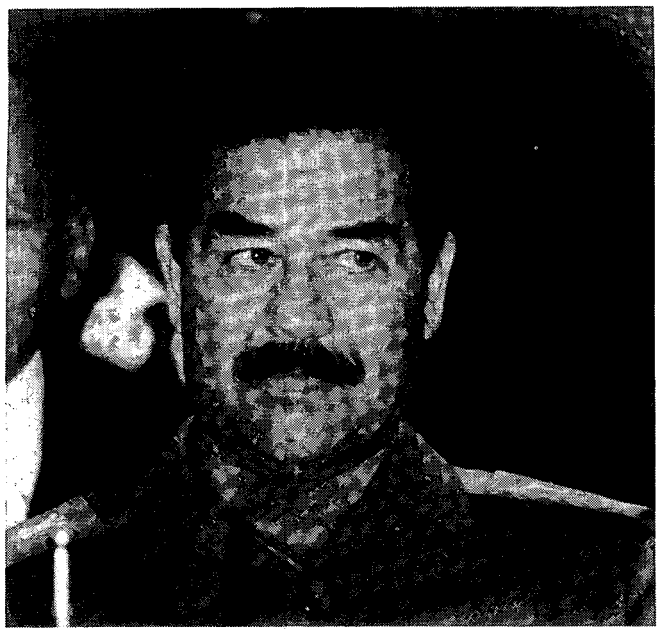

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Churchill would have considered Saddam a political gangster—certainly not a Hitler, but someone whom the democracies could not appease without peril.

world. Churchill had always opposed the Morgenthau Plan and other ideas for imposing a punitive peace on Germany. Practically, the West would need a strong and democratic Germany as a counterweight to Soviet power. Morally, Churchill believed, "In Victory: Magnanimity." The establishment of a stable and democratic Germany, firmly anchored in the West, would furnish the basis for a Franco–German reconciliation on which the cohesion, peace, and long-term prosperity of Western Europe depended. Ultimately, he saw the possibility of the world evolving toward the formation of three large democratic blocs—a United Europe, a United States, and a British-led Commonwealth serving as the bridge between the two.

After World War II, Churchill continued to adhere to his hierarchy of geopolitical and moral priorities. He recognized the importance of Asia, particularly Japan, to the outcome of the Cold War, but considered Europe the vital theater. Hence, like President Truman and his secretary of state, Dean Acheson, he warned against diversionary commitments elsewhere that would deflect the West's attention and divert their resources from Europe. His opprobrium for Mao and Chinese Communism notwithstanding, he considered the prospects for the Nationalists' success too remote, the stakes in the outcome of the Chinese civil war too limited, the cost too great, to justify massive American involvement. Similarly, he warned the Truman administration against embroiling the United States in a land war with China over North Korea, because of its potential effects on American efforts to defend Europe against the Soviet challenge in Europe, then the paramount danger.

Churchill had, in short, a contingent and sober belief in the possibility of progress for the postwar world. On one hand, he believed that eventually the spread of democracy could expand the zone of peace; on the other, he saw the process as slow, evolutionary, reversible, and dependent on Western vigilance. Nor did he believe that every state in the world was ready for democracy immediately. For a long time, the imperatives of the Cold War, the nature of international politics, and the absence of genuine democratic alternatives in many regions of the world would require democracies to make unpleasant and imperfect moral and geopolitical choices. Ultimately, he considered the ideals and self-interests of the democracies highly complementary. Again, he was right.

Churchill, to be sure, was not always right. The wish was the father to his thought that Great Britain could retain its empire and superpower status. As did many Americans of his generation, he also underestimated the long- and short-term importance of Asia to the United States, or the possibility for making more rapid progress toward democratization in other areas of the world beyond Europe and the United States. Yet his consistent principles of a vigilant and decisive internationalism, grounded both in careful moral judgment and in geopolitical realism, make him the Free World's greatest statesman in this century.

Churchill in the Gulf

President Bush has followed Churchill's principles in asserting that the United States has a vital interest in preventing any hostile power from attaining hegemony in the Persian Gulf, the oil lifeline on which much of the world depends. There is little doubt that Churchill would have considered Iraq's invasion of Kuwait a serious threat, for what it revealed about Saddam Hussein's aspirations to dominate the Middle East and establish himself as arbiter of world oil prices. Having observed Saddam gassing his own population, launching an eight-year war with Iran, using chemical weapons on Iranian soldiers, comparing himself to Saladin, threatening Israel with nuclear and chemical annihilation, and feverishly developing the capability to achieve this result, Churchill would have considered Saddam a political gangster—certainly not a Hitler, but someone whom the democracies could not appease without peril. Saddam's rape of Kuwait, his ballistic missile attacks against civilian populations in Israel and Saudi Arabia, his ecologically disastrous decision to flood the Persian Gulf with Kuwaiti oil, all would merely have underscored Churchill's conviction that the West must act to defeat Iraq and remove Saddam.

Having attempted to use the League of Nations and the United Nations to resist Nazi and Soviet aggression respectively, Churchill surely would have applauded President Bush's effort to use the U.N. against Saddam in the same way. He would have considered the U.N. a means to an end, not an end in itself, bypassing the organization were it to become an obstacle to dealing with Saddam effectively. Churchill would have endorsed likewise President Bush's idea of arraying a broad coalition of forces against Saddam to minimize the political fallout within the Arab world. Churchill would not have become hostage, however, to a coalition. Based on the unsuccessful experiences with the League of Nations and the U.N., he would have had little hope that economic sanctions alone would suffice to deal with insatiable

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aggressors. He would have stressed not only the cost of using military force, but the short- and long-term cost of delay. Was it better to fight Saddam sooner rather than later when he would have a more formidable chemical and nuclear capability? Would waiting for sanctions to work preclude the option to fight, or increase the costs prohibitively? Churchill would have answered these questions the way President Bush did: war sooner.

Churchill knew well the unpredictability of war and the unintended consequences fighting could unleash. The defeat of Iraq may merely unleash Syria or Iran as the next brutal aspirant to regional hegemony. Yet, as Churchill warned relentlessly about Lenin, Hitler, and Stalin, delay would have made the cost of stopping Saddam even more prohibitive. Even if the destruction of Iraq creates a power vacuum, neither Syria nor Iran currently has Saddam's erstwhile chemical and nuclear capability. An American failure to defeat Saddam would have emboldened radical Arab enemies of the United States and destabilized the regimes of America's fragile Arab allies, which staked their fate on American credibility.

Churchill would have recognized that ideals as well as self-interest justified war against Saddam. Granted, a war to restore the Kuwaiti royal family and secure the world's oil supply was not a war directly for democracy. It did, however, have a moral basis: fighting now could minimize the havoc, death, and material suffering that Saddam could inflict on others by imposing confiscatory oil prices or using lethal force. Defeating Saddam militarily also sets a salutary precedent that will discourage if not preclude aggression elsewhere, whereas Saddam's success would have emboldened aggressors everywhere.

President Bush has learned from Churchill how to make peace as well as when to go to war. The president's insistence on unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, his generous terms after Iraq's offensive capability was destroyed, and his clear position that the allied coalition's war was with Saddam Hussein and not the Iraqi people, bear the mark of Churchill's dictum in his magisterial six-volume history of the Second World War, "In War: Resolution....In Victory: Magnanimity. In Peace: Good Will."

A society waging war on its citizens will wage war, directly or indirectly, on the world.

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Summitting with the Enemy

Senator Phil Gramm Defends the Budget Deal

An Interview by Adam Meyerson

Senator Phil Gramm (R–TX), one of conservatism's most respected leaders, surprised many admirers last year when he endorsed the budget summit agreement, including its tax increases, and failed to push strongly for enforcement of the Gramm–Rudman deficit targets that he had previously helped establish. In a January 1991 interview with *Policy Review* editor Adam Meyerson, Senator Gramm defended his role in the summit negotiations and discussed political priorities for 1991.

Policy Review: **It's no secret that many conservatives were puzzled by your role in last year's tax debate. Could you describe your economic and political rationale for endorsing, or at least not opposing (as Newt Gingrich did), the initial budget summit agreement, including its tax increases?**

Gramm: When President Bush decided to negotiate a budget agreement with House and Senate representatives, Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole appointed me as a Senate negotiator. I accepted the appointment believing that if there were going to be an agreement, it was important that the philosophy that I represent be heard in the negotiations.

Ultimately, an agreement was reached. It is fair to say that it was not the agreement that I had sought. If I had any criticism of the overall process, it would be of the president's decision to go on television to try to sell the agreement after it was reached, rather than to use his political capital before and during the negotiations to produce a more acceptable agreement.

In any case, based on my analysis of the alternatives available, I concluded that the original budget summit probably represented the best that we were going to get in terms of reducing the deficit, reducing the size of government relative to the private sector, and minimizing both the size and the negative impact of any tax increases. I was afraid that if the summit agreement were rejected, Congress would move toward fewer spending control measures and more taxes, and that the additional taxes would be highly skewed toward income taxes.

In retrospect, my fears proved to be correct. By comparison with the initial agreement, the final budget package raised taxes over five years by $12.8 billion, and reduced entitlement savings by $26 billion. The tax component in the package also changed dramatically from a tax on consumption to a tax on wealth creation. Excise taxes went down by some $30 billion, and direct and indirect income taxes went up by a corresponding amount—reducing the incentives to work, save, and invest. I voted no on that budget.

P.R.: **What were you hoping to achieve when you agreed to become a member of the summit negotiations? On what issues did you win?**

Gramm: I fought hard to maximize the savings coming from spending reductions and spending control measures. I worked to strengthen the enforcement mechanism, and I fought very hard against income taxes. Once the House rejected the budget summit agreement, I was not involved in the post-summit negotiations, and, for reasons I mentioned earlier, ultimately voted against the final budget that was adopted.

For all its failings, even the final agreement has some positive features. The most important has to do with the size of government relative to the private sector of the economy. When Gramm–Rudman became law in 1985, federal spending absorbed 23.9 percent of GNP. By the end of 1989, government spending as a percentage of GNP had fallen to 22.3 percent—the first such decline since World War II. Under the budget agreement, if fully enforced, government spending will further decline to 19.7 percent of GNP. Stated in another way, government spending as a percentage of gross national product will be roughly 18 percent smaller in 1995 than it was in 1985. I think that's what perestroika is all about. *[Federal spending is over 25 percent of GNP in fiscal year 1991—ed.]*

A second and totally unnoticed facet of the summit's proposal was carried over to the final budget agreement. We will have the largest defense build-down since World War II, but not one penny of it will be spent on more domestic programs. I was concerned that the so-called peace dividend would be used to fund a new wave of domestic spending. Instead, all of the defense reductions will go to deficit reduction.

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Gramm (third from left) with fellow summiteers. "Voting against the summit agreement was a vote for fewer spending control measures, higher taxes, and more destructive taxes in terms of wealth and job creation."

***P.R.:* On what issues did you lose in the negotiations?**

Gramm: I think the losses are pretty clear. We ended up with far too few savings in entitlement reform, too few constraints on domestic spending, and too many increases in taxes.

When I was elected to Congress, I recognized that I had to make a fundamental decision: Did I want to be judged just by how I vote or was I going to take some responsibility for what happened? Did I want to tell my grandchildren 30 years from now that things went to hell in America on my watch, but I voted against it every step of the way? Or did I want to tell them that, in some small way, my service in Congress made a difference, made things better, made Americans freer?

I viewed voting against the summit agreement as an excellent political vote to cast. But in reality, voting against the summit agreement was indirectly a vote for fewer spending control measures, higher taxes, and more destructive taxes in terms of wealth and job creation. When the summit agreement failed, taxes went up, spending went up, and the values I support suffered. It was popular to oppose the summit agreement, but did its defeat strengthen America? No!

***P.R.:* You were reportedly critical of the July resolution by House Republicans opposing a tax increase. Are those reports accurate? If so, what was your reasoning?**

Gramm: I was asked at a luncheon with my Republican House colleagues what I thought of a proposed resolution that opposed any form of revenue increases. I said that this was a laudable goal as a general statement of purpose, but in light of the summit negotiations, which had been going on for months and which clearly were going to entail some revenue increases, I thought the resolution would put its proponents in a very difficult position if an agreement were reached and they were faced with the alternative of that agreement or something worse. In fact, that is exactly what happened.

***P.R.:* Do you think the House Republicans who opposed the initial agreement are responsible for the worse one that followed?**

Gramm: I don't think the intention was to produce a poor budget, but the net result of the House's rejection of the budget summit agreement was to create the environment in which a worse bill was adopted later. I am not in any way critical of people who vote in each and every circumstance based on what they individually believe is right. However, when no weighting is given to influencing the final outcome, an excellent voting record can lead to some very bad public policy. The facts remain irrefutable that the budget summit agreement was far superior to the budget that was ultimately adopted. The economy would have been stronger, and individual opportunity and initiative would have been greater under the original summit proposal than under the final budget agreement.

It's important for conservatives to remember a line from my grandmother's favorite poem: "True worth is in being, not seeming,/ In doing each day that goes by,/ Some little good, not in dreaming/ Of great things to do, by and by."

***P.R.:* Did the congressional Republicans who opposed the initial agreement do enough to push for spending reductions that would have allowed the president to keep his tax pledge?**

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Gramm: I don't think anyone did enough to push for spending reductions. Too often conservative Republicans talk a better game of spending reduction than we vote. We want the benefits of limited government, but too often we don't want to pay for them politically by casting the tough votes to reduce resources flowing into the government so that those resources can go to the private sector to create incentives. There is a little bit of the "free-lunch" syndrome in us all.

***P.R.:* Was the GOP hurt more in the 1990 elections by the president's breaking of his pledge or by the conservatives who criticized the president?**

Gramm: I think we were hurt by both. Raising taxes is never to Republicans' advantage politically, and certainly, having made the tax pledge in the clearest possible terms, President Bush suffered some political fallout when he was forced to give in to the Democrats and raise taxes. The polls also suggest that Republicans in general and the president in particular suffered more damage from the political chaos surrounding the rejection of the summit agreement than they did from the summit process or the agreement itself.

Conservative Republicans talk a better game of spending reduction than we vote. There is a bit of the "free-lunch" syndrome in us all.

***P.R.:* An alternative to the budget agreement would have been enforcement, through a sequester, of your own Gramm–Rudman legislation. Would a sequester have made political sense for Republicans in 1990, including Phil Gramm?**

Gramm: I think that the president looked at the alternative to a budget agreement, which was a $105 billion sequester, and decided correctly that Republican members of Congress would never sustain it. It was clear to the president, and it was always clear to me, that the entire Congress would panic when faced with a sequester that entailed roughly a 30-percent reduction in programs such as air traffic control, the Drug Enforcement Administration, food inspection, and the FBI. We might have held out for a week against votes to waive the sequester order, but I'm doubtful. When the cost of the S&L bailout inflated the budget deficit, and the weakening of the economy caused further deficit hemorrhaging, President Bush was in an untenable situation.

If it had come down to it, I would have voted to sustain the sequester, and used that as the beginning point for new negotiations. In fact, it would have been my preference to have started negotiations with a sequester as a beginning point. But I have no doubt that our side lacked sufficient political resolve at that time to make this a possibility.

***P.R.:* Was some sort of "mini-sequester" a possibility?**

Gramm: No. The Democrats, who control the majority of both houses of Congress, understand their own interest in bigger government and had no incentive to agree to a mini-sequester.

***P.R.:* How serious are the divisions within the Republican Party as a result of the tax debate?**

Gramm: We've come a long way in overcoming the divisions. The most important thing is to get beyond the debate about a battle that was lost, and to focus on the battle about to be fought. As I told some of my Republican brethren at the peak of the back-biting that resulted from the budget chaos, they reminded me of the Yankee generals at Gettysburg who, on the evening following the first day of the battle, debated whom to blame for losing the Battle of Bull Run rather than planning how to win the next day.

The great budget debate is not over. It is the central debate in our country. Democrats are the party of government and Republicans are the party of opportunity, and it is in the budget that decisions are made as to whose policies will prevail. The Democrats cannot govern unless government grows. Republicans cannot govern unless opportunity grows. And both those things cannot happen simultaneously.

***P.R.:* Did House Democrats violate the budget agreement in January when they rewrote the rules on how to score spending?**

Gramm: Yes, and the president responded correctly by saying that he would veto any such bill. I don't see any such bill passing the Senate, and certainly it will never become law. But I never deceive myself into believing that the Democrats want to control either the deficit or the size of government. They can be counted on to try to renege on the budget agreement, at least around the edges, whenever that agreement limits their ability to implement their policies. That's why the enforcement mechanism in the budget law is so critically important.

***P.R.:* How can Republicans avoid being on the defensive on the tax fairness issue?**

Gramm: We have to take the issue head on, beginning with giving the American people the facts. And the facts are that under Republican leadership high-income individuals are bearing a much larger share of the overall income tax burden today than they were when Ronald Reagan became president.

In 1980, the top 1 percent of all wage earners paid 18.2 percent of all income taxes; by 1985, they paid 21.2 percent; and by 1990, they paid 25.4 percent. So, since

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Ronald Reagan became president, the income tax burden borne by the top 1 percent of all income earners in America has risen by roughly 40 percent. By lowering marginal tax rates, government is getting more money from the top 1 percent. All taxpayers are also better off because it is cheaper to pay the lower marginal rates than it is to expend resources trying to avoid them, which is what occurred prior to 1980.

Just to show you how the pattern works, the top 5 percent of all income earners in 1980 paid 36 percent of all income taxes; today, they pay 44.1 percent. The top 20 percent paid 66 percent of all income taxes in 1980; they pay 71.8 percent today. And, finally, the bottom 40 percent paid 3.6 percent of all income taxes in 1980; they pay 2.4 percent today. So the argument by Democrats that the tax changes in the Reagan era have benefitted the rich relative to the poor is totally false. The changes have benefitted everybody by creating incentives to work, save, and invest. Twenty million new jobs have been created.

More than at any time since the Roosevelt era, the Democratic Party's fundamental position is based on envy and greed. The Democrats are trying to create a class-based economic and political structure to benefit themselves politically. I am not worried, however, that their effort will be successful.

When the politics of class struggle fails in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, how will it succeed in America? The Democrats are trying to buck the tide of history, and the tide of history is not easily bucked.

This whole debate only started in the Senate last year as the election heated up, and I was not afforded an opportunity to become heavily involved in it. I intend to become involved this year. It's a debate that we can and must win.

P.R.: **How are you advising your Republican colleagues about pushing for cuts in capital gains and Social Security taxes this year?**

Gramm: We should always be pushing to reduce taxes. But I also have to remind my colleagues that in government you have to earn tax cuts by controlling the growth of government. Ultimately, if we are going to give resources back to the private sector, to create the incentives that we support, we have to keep those resources out of the hands of government, or at least to assure that the resources generated by economic growth are not squandered by government. Cutting the capital gains rate will both raise revenues and stimulate the economy.

Our immediate challenge in promoting tax cuts is to devise a mechanism to free the resources from government, so that they can flow into the private sector.

P.R.: **As an economist, are you worried more by tax increases and continued high growth in government spending, or by the possibility of a collapse in the world trading system?**

Gramm: As concerned as I am about the budget, I think the greatest peril we face is the possibility of a further rise in protectionism. A major wave of protectionism in America could have a far more harmful impact on our freedom and our standard of living than a major increase in taxes. I will do everything I can to preserve and strengthen the growth of international trade, which has been a primary generator of global economic growth since World War II, and which probably did more than anything else to tear down the Berlin Wall and to sound the death knell of Communism.

P.R.: **Will you be pushing strongly as you have in the past for a free-trade agreement with Mexico and other countries in the Western Hemisphere?**

Gramm: The expansion of trade is always in the interest of the working men and women of America, although, unfortunately, the benefits of trade are not widely understood. I am strongly pushing for the creation of a free-trade agreement that would initially include Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Such a trade agreement would create the world's largest market and improve living standards on the whole continent of North America. I view this as only an interim step. I would hope that by 1992, on the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America, we could set into place a system to negotiate a free-trade agreement that would extend from the Arctic to the Antarctic, and would guarantee that any worker in any village in the Americas could produce goods and services that could be sold without restriction anywhere in the Western Hemisphere.

Now, I know some people say that's an unrealistic dream, but it is a dream worthy of our great country and of what it aspires for all of mankind.

P.R.: **You've suggested that opposition to racial quotas is a cutting-edge issue.**

Gramm: Racial quotas are anathema to America and everything America stands for. We have to take them on, not because they represent a cutting-edge issue, but because they are wrong. And I have found that when we take a position that is right and fight for it, we benefit. I have always believed in a colorblind society, where hard work and talent count, and where merit is rewarded. This is a simple and straightforward issue, and the American people—across all income and racial lines—understand it. And we ought not be afraid to stand up and say that policies that guarantee results rather than opportunity undercut the American system.

P.R.: **What are the most important foreign policy differences between Republicans and Democrats?**

Gramm: Democrats want peace and Republicans want peace *and* freedom, for ourselves and all of mankind. Republicans understand that, in the long run, only when people are free to use their God-given talents to advance themselves and their families and their nations can there be world peace. So our fundamental approach to foreign policy has to be to promote freedom and opportunity around the world.

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The Courage of Our Convictions

A Call to Arms for Senate Conservatives

Senator Malcolm Wallop

Who are they as bats and night-dogs askant in the Capitol? Are those really Congressmen?

—Walt Whitman, "To the States"

Walt Whitman's words of over a century ago doubtless took on a new—and hardly flattering—significance during the last weeks of the 101st Congress. Few members or observers of Congress would ask for a repetition of the budget debate last autumn. For conservatives in Congress, the process was a nightmare, its result antithetical to both our campaign promises and our fundamental beliefs.

Conservatives in the 101st Congress seemed to have lost the passion and the principles that brought us to politics. We waited for the president to define the great domestic issues of the day—instead of doing ourselves what we were elected to do. Our failure of leadership permitted conservative public discourse to be dominated by politically trivial issues such as the limitation of terms—which say in effect that conservatives need not bother to go into and stay in politics, that we no longer matter.

Rather than accepting this grim assessment, we should re-learn the lessons of the great conservative victories in Congress during this century—for example, the late Senator Robert Taft's great triumph enacting the Taft–Hartley Act, which amended federal labor law, and the late Senator Everett Dirksen's determined and eloquent defense of Section 14(b) of that law protecting state right-to-work laws—a defensive battle for a philosophically positive *goal*. The great conservative senators of this century—Republicans Taft of Ohio and Dirksen of Illinois, Democrats Walter George and Richard Russell of Georgia—were uncommon men, admired and respected by their colleagues, and able to change the course of events.

Times have of course changed; the close scrutiny of television cameras in Congress has made the American tendency toward distant hero-worship a thing of the past. It is no longer just eloquent oratory that reaches the average American from the Congress, but the mundane day-to-day business of legislating as well. But what made these men great leaders has not changed with time or technology; they put country and principle above party and politics. They held strong beliefs, they held them without compromise, and they were willing to move Heaven and earth—and even the United States Senate—to advance those beliefs. A leader with the courage of his convictions, willing to argue a moral case even while standing alone, will greatly influence the House of Representatives, and virtually control the Senate. Moreover, a leader willing to risk his career to stand by his belief will probably advance both, since the American people respond both to moral convictions and to those who articulate them.

And we need not go back so many years, nor look for such high-profile issues, to find "conservative success" in Congress. We need go back only to the 1970s. Democrats controlled both houses of Congress by greater majorities than today: after the 1976 elections the Democrats controlled the House 292–143, and had 62 senators to the GOP's 38. Moderate-to-liberal Republicans and then a liberal Democrat sat in the Oval Office, liberals (then, as now) dominated the media, and the permanent federal bureaucracy in Washington had free rein.

Yet, that was the soil in which a movement grew, the beginning of a burgeoning conservative political presence. Ideas and ideals defined the conservative movement then. And these ideas and ideals affected the public conscience and molded the national debate.

A Small Victorious Band

During the mid-to-late 1970s, with as few as 38 Republican senators, the passionate energy of a small band of conservatives challenged the most important elements of the liberal agenda and stopped them dead in their tracks. They halted "Labor Law Reform," AFL–CIO-backed amendments to federal law that would have increased the power and influence of organized labor. And they prevented the ratification of the strategic arms limitation treaty with the Soviet Union (SALT II). Congress defeated other liberal proposals by either sustaining or leaving unchallenged President Ford's vetoes.

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These included common-situs picketing, which would have permitted building trade unions to shut down an entire construction project when one union had a dispute with any one contractor or subcontractor on the job site; an emergency jobs programs, which would have increased federal interference with the free market; and repeal of the Hatch Act, the law that protects federal workers from coercion by restricting their involvement in partisan political activity.

Conservatives carried those successes into the 1980s, enacting the Reagan-Gramm-Latta budget, mandating spending cuts along with the Roth–Kemp income tax cuts. Indexation of income taxes, first proposed in the '70s, was enacted in 1981. In the early '80s the Senate passed a balanced budget constitutional amendment. As late as 1984, a determined band of conservative senators blocked passage of the Grove City legislation—the so-called civil rights bill that brought under federal regulatory control, on an institution-wide basis, any college or university that accepts federal funding of any dimension, even, absurdly, federal student loans. Unfortunately, the Democrats, with a number of Republican votes, successfully overrode President Reagan's veto of a virtually identical bill only a few years later.

Our victories in the early 1980s were particularly significant, because they changed not only the framework of our national debate, but national policy. The Reagan-backed tax and budget initiatives of 1981 were part of an economic reform package that produced a decade of record economic growth and prosperity and millions of new jobs. In foreign policy, the clear and uncomplicated enunciation of the Reagan Doctrine declaring U.S. support for freedom-seekers across the world set the stage for the collapse of the Soviet empire that we cheer today. We would not have known such victories if the groundwork had not been so painstakingly and insistently laid through the preceding decade.

Moral leadership does not require accolades from the media, nor majority votes in Congress, nor favorable public opinion polls.

Issue-Defining Votes

As important as our victories in the 1970s was the price conservatives forced the liberal Democrats to pay for theirs: a continuing series of issue-defining votes; votes that put the liberals in Congress on record, again and again, on issue after issue. It was this tenacity that ultimately produced the dramatic election of 1980, in which Republicans gained 33 seats in the House and 12 seats in the Senate. Controversial issues on which conservatives in Congress forced recorded votes during the Carter years included busing, school prayer, food stamps for strikers, income tax cuts, the death penalty, taxpayer bailouts of New York City and Chrysler Corporation, the Panama Canal treaty, and abortion.

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We cannot acquiesce when "our horse" throws a political shoe.

In short, in the 1970s and early 1980s, conservatives made a difference by defining the difference. Without guilt or apology we confronted the press, the Democrats, and even, on occasion, the Republican leadership. Through that confrontation, we brought others along in large numbers to the side that was increasingly supported by the American people.

The political battles of the '70s led to both electoral and legislative successes in the early '80s, successes that revived a stagnant economy and renewed America's faith in herself. After the long Vietnam and post-Watergate years, Republicanism, conservatism, and patriotism all surged into acceptability.

Disappointments of the Reagan Years

The dawn of the '80s and the ascendancy of Ronald Reagan were born of the successes of the '70s. But the decade that started with so much hope ended in frustration. The disappointments of the Reagan presidency were due less to Ronald Reagan than to the reluctance of conservatives to criticize "our horse." By our acquiescent silence, we allowed things to happen that would have stampeded us to the floor had Jimmy Carter or any other Democratic president proposed them. When we found that "our horse" would occasionally throw a political shoe, we felt shy about shoeing him in front of the American people—especially since he was traveling sound on three hooves.

Perhaps this was the inevitable byproduct of achieving a majority status—for the first time in decades—in one house of Congress. The one great dilemma we could never confront—especially with a GOP-controlled Senate and White House—was how to stay energized. Accommodation of all Republicans, including those who

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had always accommodated the Democrats, became our pattern.

In the majority, we failed to sustain the passion of principle, for fear of offending the principle of accommodation. As the 1984 election approached, many around President Reagan began to think in terms of "mandate" and "carrying all 50" states. Passion and struggle gave way to being all things to all states.

Perhaps our greatest frustration came in 1985, when the Senate Republicans bit really big bullets in passing a budget resolution that terminated 13 federal programs, scaled back entitlements, and froze Social Security COLAs for one year—acts that, had they become law, would have produced significantly reduced deficits by now. The ailing then-Senator and now-Governor Pete Wilson, brought back to the Senate chamber from a post-surgery hospital bed, dramatically cast a tie-making vote; the victorious tie-breaking vote was then cast by Vice President Bush. After these principled and courageous votes, President Reagan, in Europe, on the advice of Jim Baker, gave the Senate's budget short shrift. He then pulled the rug out from under Senate Republicans by repudiating our budget and accepting a "business-as-usual" House-passed budget *without* entitlement reform, program termination, or spending restraint. Senate Republicans, let alone conservatives, never recovered their confidence after those events.

We seemed from then on to side with those who felt it unseemly to confront "our own." For some conservatives, the fear of having limbs sawed off behind them made them loath to crawl out on any limb. For others among us, "governing" required that we act "responsibly." With such a change of heart, it was virtually inevitable we would lose Republican control of the Senate in 1986, with further net losses each year since.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, conservatives made a difference by defining the difference. Without guilt or apology we confronted the press, the Democrats, and even, on occasion, the Republican leadership.

Debilitating Bipartisanship

As the '90s begin, Republicans still have not returned to the role we played so well only a decade ago—that of political opposition. Behaving instead as if we were a minority party in a coalition government, we Republicans are useful to the majority when we facilitate their task of governing. They can therefore include us to some degree in the day-to-day decision-making, but our participation is not essential to their function as the governing power in Congress. When their interests are adverse to our professed principles, they simply freeze us out or run roughshod over us. So long as conservative Republicans' primary concern is participation in the "process" of governance—rather than *principle*—we can expect disastrous results.

Last fall during the budget debate, Representative Jim Leach, liberal Republican from Iowa, articulated the case for "process" in a *New York Times* op-ed:

> Given conservative obduracy and the resulting political gridlock, the president has little choice but to seek a governing coalition with the Democrats in Congress, one in which centrist Republicans can be utilized to avoid a stampede to the left. A center-Democrat coalition has the potential to save Republicans from themselves on fairness issues, even though it could lead to a deficit package with fewer new tax deductions and slightly greater spending authorization.

To what end, may I ask you, Representative Leach? Rather than acknowledging that our country's political ills today are a result of the subordination of ideas to process, you join those political commentators in the media and academia who place the blame on "divided" government—that is, the control of Congress and the executive branch by different political parties. Their solution to the problem is dead wrong: to avoid government "gridlock," they argue, we must have "bipartisan consensus" on all controversial matters. Their solution only exacerbates the problem.

In our democracy, political division is a sign of the health and vigor that the Founding Fathers intended when they wrote the Constitution. The two parties represent—or ought to represent—distinct, even diametric viewpoints on most issues. As Edmund Burke wrote 200 years ago, "Party divisions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inseparable from free government."

Yet, today, to avoid gridlock—to "move the process forward"—"bipartisanship" has largely replaced "party divisions." This bipartisanship is debilitating. Columnist George Will wrote just last November, "A party leader who disparages arguing as bickering and who prefers mushy bipartisanship to healthy polarizing along fault lines of principles, disarms his party and pays a price. Tuesday's [election] results are just the first installment."

"Process" affects not just elections, but the elected: we no longer work within the conventional procedures and democratic practices of debating and voting. The preferred method of governing is to have the leadership of both parties lock themselves and senior members of relevant committees behind closed doors until they come up with a "consensus," a "bipartisan summit package."

The results may be indeed "bipartisan," but any "consensus" claimed is totally illusory. The negotiators know this, and declare summit packages sacrosanct. Any

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proposed amendment—regardless of how relevant—is opposed merely because it is not part of the deal. No real consensus is so easily threatened, but our constitutional prerogatives to participate in debate and offer amendments are routinely stifled to protect the phony "consensus" of summit packages. The entire Congress is hostage to agreements negotiated and entered into by but a handful of its members.

Prisoners of Summitry

The Republicans involved in the budget negotiations of the 101st Congress labored hard, but demonstrated little real leadership. Until the end, conservative leadership was even less visible, which was why the divisions seemed not creative, but obstructionist.

Leadership requires embracing real passion and conviction but not, as in the summit, the opposition's passion! Sadly, the former never existed and the latter resulted in the budget summit.

The summit rejected all views but those of the negotiators. Their reality was the Stockholm Syndrome of hostages accommodating the views of their captors. The negotiators became captives in the prison of process; they imposed demands upon themselves because the summit was more powerful than the principles by then forsworn.

Those who produced the results of the summit bitterly resented the opposition from members of their own party. They demanded that the summit's dead product be accepted in the name of "governance." The conservatives recognized that the product was dead. Most of Congress did. The public surely did—but its negotiators defend it yet today, and Congress wallows in public contempt.

Teddy Roosevelt said, in a speech in Philadelphia in 1902, "From the beginning our people have markedly combined practical capacity for affairs with power of devotion to an idea. The lack of either quality would have rendered the other of small value." Summitry demonstrates neither a capacity for affairs nor a devotion to an idea.

Senate Republicans never recovered their confidence after President Reagan pulled the rug out from under them in 1985.

Pole Star in the Gulf

While participants negotiate major ideological differences into a vast gray mass, big federal government is reaching ever further into our society. Reregulation is strangling our free enterprise system, increased taxes and spending are bringing us into recession, and we are replacing the goal of a "color-blind society," of which the late Senator Hubert Humphrey spoke a generation ago, with an offensive systematic division of our citizenry into groupings of gender, race, ethnic origin, and sexual orientation to establish paint-by-numbers quotas.

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During the Carter years, with as few as 38 GOP senators, conservatives stopped the liberal agenda dead in its tracks.

If you reject this sullen view of "governance," compare the response of President Bush to the Persian Gulf crisis, his development of policy there, and the American people's support for that policy.

President Bush, acting with fierce moral conviction in the Persian Gulf, insisted on the world's attention, and he got it through the United Nations. He demanded support of Congress, and he got it—having left no doubt that he intended to act even without its support. A once skeptical public, increasingly persuaded by his passionate belief in the correctness of his cause, strengthened its support. That was leadership based on unyielding devotion to a principled belief.

This is what conviction and passion bring to the body politic, and this is what was meant to be in properly functioning democracies. For one fabulous moment the thousand points of light found a pole star, and as the country turned toward that star, the national self-confidence rose.

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Emptying the Swamp

Clearly, the domestic situation must change. Even more clearly, conservatives must change it themselves. If we continue to allow the Democratic agenda to be the headlights for a Republican administration, we will continue to get no credit for the ideas, and blame for their inadequate results. Those who decide to enter politics accept—by that decision—an obligation to make tough choices; a politician who seeks always to avoid controversy cannot lead. In an address to the German Social-Democrat Party Congress in 1903, August Bebel said, "The field of politics always presents the same struggle. There are the Right and the Left, and in the middle is the Swamp. The Swamp is made up of know-nothings, of them who are without ideas, of them who are always with the majority."

The 102nd Congress is just beginning, and with it comes the opportunity for conservatives to empty the Swamp, to shape again the national debate. In Congress, conservatives should insist that summitry be abandoned. This process is antithetical to our constitutional design. We must demand debate, at whatever length appropriate, on any issue—even that produced in a summit package! We should offer amendments, even when we know we will lose. If negotiators and leadership know in advance that conservatives will force votes on critical issues, even on "summit packages," they may well be less inclined to accept unsatisfactory compromises, and less inclined still to agree to a deal by which they must oppose all offered amendments.

Politically trivial issues such as the limitation of terms say in effect that conservatives need not bother to go into and stay in politics, that we no longer matter.

For reasons of both politics and policy, conservatives should revisit the 1970s today. We should again force the majority in Congress to vote on the cutting-edge issues that define us and both define and divide them. The more adamantly the liberals attempt to prevent such votes, the more insistent should we be in demanding them. Many of the key votes today will be the same as those cast in the 1970s, some will be new to this decade; all are part of a renewed commitment to make clear our party and ideological differences. We should let the American voter know where each member of Congress stands on voluntary prayer in our schools, tough treatment for criminals including the death penalty, tax cuts and spending restraint, racial quotas, choice in education, taxpayer funding of obscenity masquerading as art, and maintaining a strong national defense *including* a strengthened strategic defense program.

By these votes we will redefine partisan differences, and in so doing reawaken the interest of grass-roots America; strengthening our hand in Congress by strengthening our mandate. When we show the American people clear objectives and vital partisan differences, they will again focus on advancing ideas rather than on limiting terms, which is surrender to failure.

Conservatives must not allow our movement to fail, because the ideas that form the basis of conservative thought are those that have sustained our Republic since its inception. We believe our nation is composed of individuals—not just "interest groups." We believe in family, neighborhood, community—not just government. Every American should, no *must*, have not just the right, but the responsibility, to make choices—without government intrusion into each of those decisions. Moreover, we must reject the attempt by advocates of government to quantify and categorize each of us by the choices we make: rejection of artificial racial quotas does not make one a racist, resistance to federal day-care does not make one anti-child, rejection of taxpayer funding of pornography does not make one an enemy of the arts or a censor.

Joyful, Passionate Debate

Conservative ideas are simple, fundamental: we believe in limited government, individual liberty, the sanctity of human life, a strong national defense, respect for God and country. For us to succeed, however, there must always be among us some leaders for whom the advancement of the ideal is paramount, and process and governance only means to that greater end.

Moral leadership does not require accolades from the media, nor majority votes in Congress, nor favorable public opinion polls. Rather, moral leadership invites controversy, encourages dissent. In a 1941 speech to the House of Commons, Winston Churchill said, "I see it said that leaders should keep their ears to the ground. All I can say is that the British nation will find it very hard to look up to the leaders who are detected in that somewhat ungainly posture."

For conservatives, real leadership—even statesmanship—should be simple: we must have confidence in our principles and the courage to act on them. The country cannot but be well served by revitalization of a moral, committed, activist cadre of conservatives reshaping the national debate within the halls of Congress. Joyful, passionate in the combat of ideas, confident that that was what the Founders expected, we will see the people again respond. ☎

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The Great American Tax Debate

A Symposium

Martin Anderson, Gary L. Bauer, Warren T. Brookes, Milton Friedman, David D. Hale, Daniel J. Mitchell, Stephen Moore, Grover Norquist, Richard W. Rahn, Alan Reynolds, Phyllis Schlafly, Richard Vedder, Murray Weidenbaum

In February 1991 *Policy Review* asked a number of conservative economists and family specialists to discuss the when, where, why, how much, and whether of cutting federal taxes. Participants were asked to respond to two questions:

1) Do you favor cutting any federal taxes (or expanding any credits and deductions) in FY 1991 or FY 1992? If so, please explain the changes you would recommend and why, and estimate how much your proposal would cost (or benefit) the Treasury. Similarly, explain your reasons if you do not recommend tax cuts at this time.

2) How would you justify the tax cuts you propose in the face of $300-billion-plus deficits? Or, alternatively, are there any offsetting revenue increases or (mechanisms for) spending restraints you would recommend to finance your proposed tax cuts?

Martin Anderson

Senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, and White House domestic policy adviser, 1981–1982

The Reagan boom of the 1980s was the greatest economic expansion this country has ever had. Eight straight years of economic growth. Inflation down. Interest rates down. Almost 20 million new jobs created. The driving force behind this unprecedented economic growth was the reduction of personal income tax rates. The top marginal rate was 70 percent when Reagan was elected in 1980; when he left office it was 28 percent. There is still room for more reductions.

The key to getting the economy back on the fast track, where it was purring along until it was derailed by the Brady–Darman budget "deal" of 1990, is to cut personal income tax rates without increasing the federal deficit. This means controlling irresponsible federal spending, which is the real culprit in our $300 billion deficit.

During the past two years alone, from 1989 to 1991, federal expenditures—leaving out interest payments—have increased a whopping 20.4 percent. This wild spending spree seems to have occurred virtually unnoticed by the watchful eyes of OMB and the Congressional Budget Office, who apparently seem quite proud of their spending restraint. In 1989 federal expenditures (less interest payments) were $1,007 billion; in 1991 they will be $1,213 billion. That's more than a $100-billion-a-year increase.

Personal income taxes amount to $493 billion in 1991. For every $5 billion of spending restraint—not cutting, just restraint—we can cut the taxes of the working people of America by 1 percent.

Our immediate economic policy goal should be to reduce personal income taxes by 5 percent. We can "pay" for that nice healthy cut—without increasing the deficit—with a slightly more than 2 percent reduction in federal spending. With the exception of interest, virtually no spending is "uncontrollable." What Congress has wrought, Congress can change. We need to tackle federal spending and taxes with the same ferocity, skill, and determination that we used on Saddam Hussein.

Gary L. Bauer

President of the Family Research Council, and White House domestic policy adviser, 1987–1988

Despite all the talk about tax "fairness" in recent months, little attention has been given to the most glaring "fairness" issue in the federal tax code—overtaxation of America's families with children. Since 1948, the proportion of income claimed by federal income taxes has increased roughly 130 percent for single taxpayers, 150 percent for childless couples, and a whopping 2,600 percent for median-income families of four.

The erosion of the value of the dependent exemption

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is the primary reason for this disparity. If the exemption shielded from taxation the same proportion of income today as it did in 1950, parents would be able to exempt nearly $7,000 for each dependent child. Instead, they can claim only $2,050.

To remedy this problem, tax cuts keyed to the presence and number of children are needed. Two approaches are worth considering: 1) increasing the current exemption to $7,000; or 2) creating a non-refundable tax credit worth at least $1,000 per dependent child. (An exemption provides a buffer for families when rates rise; a credit more efficiently targets relief to middle-income taxpayers since its value is not influenced by rate amounts.)

In either case, federal taxpayers with children would be permitted to keep between $40 billion and $60 billion a year—dollar amounts comparable to the revenue loss associated with the payroll tax cuts being advocated by Senators Moynihan and Mitchell. Unlike the Moynihan–Mitchell proposal, however, these pro-child measures would target tax relief to the taxpayers that need relief most—families with children. In fact, the Moynihan–Mitchell legislation would offer a childless couple earning $100,000 a year three times the tax benefits provided a median-income family of four.

Special attention needs to be given to families with *young* children since these families typically have lower earning power and greater child-rearing time demands than other families. Accordingly, Congress should triple the Young Child Tax Credit (which currently is limited to children in the first year of life) and move it up the age and income scales so that middle-income families can benefit.

Apart from addressing the "fairness" issue, pro-child tax cuts would increase the economic autonomy of parents, thereby reducing the pressure for government programs (like day-care) that supplant family functions. Indeed, cuts in government programs—whether targeted at certain anti-family programs (like the Title X Family Planning Program) or extended across the board (like The Heritage Foundation's proposal to limit annual spending increases to 4 percent)—would be the ideal funding mechanism for pro-child tax cuts.

Are there more efficient ways than pro-child tax cuts to stimulate the economy? No doubt there are. But fostering economic growth is not now and never should be the only objective of tax policy. While there is reason to be concerned about several recent quarters of economic decline, there is even greater reason to be concerned about a quarter-century of family decline. Just as we should give attention to tax policies designed to help us out of our economic recession, we should give considerable attention to tax policies designed to help us out of our family recession.

Warren T. Brookes

Nationally syndicated economics columnist with the Detroit News

The conventional wisdom is that the federal deficit is so large any tax cuts at this time would be irresponsible. However, one reason the deficits are now soaring is that taxes were *raised* in 1990, causing higher spending and slower economic and revenue growth.

Thus the way to reduce those deficits is to promote economic growth through the right incentives. First, the capital gains tax should either be abolished for all investments held longer than three years, or simply reduced to a top rate of 15 percent for any assets held over one year; or barring those moves, fully indexed for inflation.

Abolition or rate reduction would immediately make U.S. costs of capital competitive with Germany and Japan, and stimulate at least an additional 0.5 percent to 1.0 percent increase in nominal GNP growth (about $30 billion to $60 billion a year). Abolition would yield $6 billion to $12 billion a year in new revenues to the federal government—more than paying the cost of losing that portion of gains that would be shifted from short to long term. A rate cut to 15 percent would generate a direct revenue feedback of $11 billion over five years, plus somewhat smaller growth effects. Either move would also cut the costs of the S&L bailout by at least $20 billion to $40 billion, and massively reduce the drain on the FDIC fund, by raising total real estate values by anywhere from 9 to 22 percent. That alone would rescue our banking system, and end a recession caused by a banking credit crunch.

Indexation would have the same favorable effect on the S&L bailout costs (and real estate values), but would not offer the immediate revenue feedbacks that a rate cut would, or as much of a long-term capital stimulus as abolition. It would, therefore, probably reduce revenues in the short run more than it would offset outlays for the Resolution Trust Corporation.

In addition, the present 2.2 percent in "surplus" Social Security payments now being made to "fund" the system should be returned to the workers in the form of an Individual Social Security Retirement Account that would be managed and accrued privately. Workers would agree to give up future benefits on a dollar-for-dollar basis, thus "privatizing" the Social Security surplus.

This would wipe out the Social Security surplus and increase the nation's cash flow deficit, but since Congress took Social Security out of the budget, it no longer helps reduce that deficit anyway. It would be better to put this money into private investment management than to have it used entirely to support and hide higher federal spending. So far, the Social Security surplus has been an engine for deficit and spending expansion. We should make it an engine for private savings and investment.

Milton Friedman

Nobel Prize-winning economist and senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution

I have long favored cutting federal taxes at any time in any way and in any manner whenever the opportunity strikes. This applies to fiscal year 1991, fiscal year 1992, and fiscal year X. The reason is that the real problem for the nation is not the deficit but excessive governmental spending. Government spends whatever the tax system will raise plus the largest level of deficits that the

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nation will tolerate. Cutting federal taxes is the only effective way of cutting government spending.

With respect to the tax cuts that are in the realm of current political feasibility, I would 1) reduce the Social Security payroll tax; 2) index the base for capital gains; and 3) index interest income so that taxes are paid only on that portion of interest that exceeds the inflation rate. (Similarly, payers of interest should be able to deduct only the real interest rate from their taxable income.)

These proposals are band-aids to correct the most obvious defects in our present tax system. Proposals for fundamental reform would be much more far-reaching.

I am not in a position to estimate the effect of these changes on revenues or receipts. The more important question is how much would the taxpaying public and our society as a whole benefit. The changes I suggest would benefit our society as a whole by increasing the equity of the tax system and by bringing pressure on Congress to reduce unproductive and counterproductive expenditures.

Governmental spending at federal, state, and local levels now amounts to 43 percent of the national income. In addition, government mandates a host of expenditures on private individuals that do not appear on the budget. Government today is controlling well over 50 percent of our national income. I do not believe that we are getting our money's worth. Much of that spending is similar to digging holes and filling them; one hand doing one thing, the other hand the opposite. We subsidize the growing of tobacco; we spend money persuading people not to smoke. We spend money to keep fluid milk prices high; we spend money to subsidize school lunches in order to enable schools to buy fluid milk at that exorbitant price.

As to spending restraints, I have long been in favor of a tax-limitation and balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

David D. Hale

Chief economist for Kemper Financial Services

It will be difficult to reduce the federal tax share of GNP during the 1990s because the structural or full-employment budget deficit is still stuck at 2.5–3 percent of GNP at a time when global capital markets face much greater competition for funds than prevailed during the early 1980s. Indeed, it is instructive to note that U.S. long-term bond yields are still above 8 percent even though the economy is in recession and inflation is poised to drop into the 3–4 percent range for the next several months. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the cost of German reunification, coupled with a decline in Japan's surplus savings, has added 50–100 basis points to the level of U.S. long-term bond yields since 1989. In the early 1980s, by contrast, it was relatively easy for the United States to finance large government deficits and robust private investment because most other countries had declining government deficits and surplus private savings.

As both the White House and Congress have made it clear that the federal spending share of GNP is stuck at 21–22 percent of GNP, the major fiscal issues facing the United States center on the structure of the tax system, not the level of the tax share of GNP. How can the United States raise its low savings rate in order to encourage a higher level of investment and productivity growth? One needs to make only a few comparisons with global tax trends in order to see where the U.S. could take effective action to improve its economic performance.

First, in the 1980s, the U.S. was the only industrial country to enact large income tax cuts without compensating for revenue losses through higher consumption taxes. Even Canada and Japan have introduced broad-based national consumption taxes. As a result, there is a great risk that future attempts to reduce the federal deficit will cause marginal income tax rates to rise back into the 35–40 percent range.

Second, the U.S. is the only industrial country to provide corporations with unlimited tax relief for interest payments and no tax allowance for dividends. This feature of the U.S. tax system helped to spawn the leverage boom of the 1980s. The borrowing boom also reduced national savings by lowering the profit share of GNP.

Third, the U.S. is the only industrial country to provide the household sector with huge tax allowances for mortgages. There is a modest mortgage allowance in the U.K., but in most other industrial countries there are no tax credits for housing. Although the reduction in marginal income tax rates during the 1980s reduced the relative value of the mortgage credit, it is still an expensive fiscal allowance for a country that is concerned about its low level of savings and investment.

On the basis of these comparisons, it is relatively easy to see how the U.S. should restructure its tax system in order to enhance national savings and investment. The country should attempt to protect the marginal income tax reductions of the 1980s by raising new revenues through higher consumption taxes, not higher income taxes. If there are to be any changes in the income tax code for purposes of tax equity, Congress should reduce the value of tax allowances for housing, not jack up marginal tax rates. Finally, the United States desperately needs to address the issue of corporate tax structure. Because of the current tax structure, American firms have high capital costs compared with other countries and strong incentives to use debt. With the country moving toward a universal banking system, the current tax system could encourage even more leveraging during the mid- to late-1990s.

One of the great risks facing the U.S. economy in the 1990s is that the new populist trend apparent in national politics will cause Congress to reverse some of the benign tax changes that occurred during the Reagan era despite the fact that we are entering the 1990s with one of the lowest savings rates in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). More disciplined financial regulation and a gradually aging population should give a boost to the national savings rate even if tax policy takes a more populist turn, but if the U.S. is to achieve an internationally competitive economy, it cannot continue to have a tax structure that diverges widely from the OECD trend in ways that discourage savings and investment.

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DANIEL J. MITCHELL

John M. Olin Distinguished Fellow in Political Economy for The Heritage Foundation

Reducing rates is the most important long-term aim of tax policy, with the ultimate goal being a flat tax rate on all income at the lowest level possible. The tax code should both allow people to keep the maximum possible amount of the income they have earned and minimize the distortionary effect taxes have on private economic decision-making. Low rates satisfy these requirements and would boost growth and increase competitiveness.

On the corporate side, businesses must take several years to deduct the expense of new machinery, equipment, and structures from their total revenues under current law, a requirement that substantially increases the cost of investment in today's dollars. A neutral tax code would allow businesses to determine taxable profits by subtracting total costs, including investments made that year, from total revenue. Low rates are also important, but it is crucial that the code be changed to eliminate this bias against investment.

Fortunately, Senator Malcolm Wallop (R–WY), along with Congressmen Tom DeLay (R–TX) and Robin Tallon (D–SC), have introduced legislation that will move the tax code in the right direction. The Economic Growth and Jobs Creation Act of 1991 includes four critical reforms: 1) reduction of the Social Security payroll tax rate from 12.4 percent of taxable income to 10.6 percent; 2) reduction of the capital gains tax from 28 percent to a maximum of 15 percent and indexation for inflation; 3) expansion of individual retirement accounts to all Americans and elimination of the tax on interest income upon retirement; and 4) allowance of full expensing of business investment after an initial phase-in period.

The Wallop–DeLay–Tallon bill would substantially boost economic performance by reducing the tax burden on working, saving, and investing; and the economic growth induced by the legislation would certainly minimize the loss of government revenue. However, opponents will claim the bill would dramatically increase the deficit, at least according to the static, simplistic revenue estimates produced by the Joint Committee on Taxation.

While conservatives should not allow opponents' phony concerns about the deficit to stand in the way of growth-oriented tax legislation, neither should conservatives neglect the equally important task of reducing government spending. Reducing government spending, whether it is financed by taxes or borrowing, is necessary to guarantee long-term prosperity.

While there are several reforms that would help limit the amount of resources the government confiscates from the productive sector of the economy, the one that is both realistic and effective is the imposition of inflexible limits on total federal spending enforced by automatic budget cuts. Such spending limits should allow outlays to grow by no more than 4 percent annually, a dramatic improvement compared with the 10 percent annual growth George Bush has permitted.

Strictly enforced spending limits, combined with pro-growth tax legislation will simultaneously boost economic growth and reduce the amount of our nation's output that is consumed by government spending. George Bush's return to Jimmy Carter economics has not worked; it's time to go back to Reaganomics.

STEPHEN MOORE

Director of fiscal studies for the Cato Institute

A year ago who would have ever guessed that carrying the banner for the most populist tax-cut proposal since Kemp–Roth would not be a Reagan Republican, but rather a Democrat—and a liberal one at that?

Senator Pat Moynihan's proposal to roll back the Social Security tax would benefit some 130 million working Americans with $60 billion of tax relief. Yet, cowardly Republicans, who are loath to mention the words "Social Security" and "cuts" in the same sentence (even when the cuts refer to the depressive 12 percent tax rates, not the benefits) have been continually searching up Moynihan's sleeve to find the dagger hidden there.

The Moynihan plan is pro-savings, pro-investment, pro-jobs, pro-small business, and pro-worker. Where's the downside? Although some Republicans—notably Senator Bob Kasten of Wisconsin—are beginning to join Moynihan's tax-cut crusade, the bumbling resistance from the White House and the Republican leadership in Congress leads one to think that maybe there is something to the charge that the Republicans have become the party of the rich.

Two related economically desirable and politically achievable tax changes are to eliminate the Social Security earnings test and to chop in half the tax on Social Security benefits. Both of these virtually force senior citizens into retirement at age 65, by placing them in 50 to 80 percent tax brackets. These unfair tax penalties deprive the U.S. economy of the talents and skills of hundreds of thousands of its most productive citizens by forcing them into premature retirement.

Why is it imperative that we cut taxes today? The short answer is that this is how we got out of the last recession. Almost from the day the Kemp–Roth tax cuts took full effect, in January 1983, the economy began to shake out of its decade-long doldrums. The tax cuts unleashed a ferocious economic expansion—beyond the expectations of even the most ardent champions of Reaganomics. Only the accumulated weight of 14 subsequent tax increases—culminating in Bush's $150 billion breach of faith last year—finally squashed the record rally.

Economists will argue endlessly whether the economic spurt of the 1980s was more a Keynesian experience (with growth driven by record federal borrowing) or a supply-side experiment (with growth driven by the incentive effects of tax cuts). Whether we have Lord Keynes or Professor Laffer to thank, America could do much worse in the 1990s than to match the economic triumphs of the 1980s by cutting taxes again.

As for the deficit, if eight years of a relentless frontal assault on wasteful spending by the likes of Ronald Reagan, David Stockman, and Jim Miller couldn't cut

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the budget, than perhaps the best we can do is deprive the spenders of their revenues.

Grover Norquist

President of Americans for Tax Reform

Mae West's observation about sex is true of tax cuts: All tax cuts are good tax cuts. When the tax on human action—such as earning a living, owning a car or house, or buying a product—is reduced, the liberty of all Americans is increased.

While all tax cuts reduce the power of the state and increase the power of individuals, some taxes damage economic growth and job creation more than others.

Reducing and eventually eliminating the capital gains tax will create jobs, opportunities, eliminate the double taxation of income and put us on a more even playing field with the Japanese and Europeans. Reducing the tax rate on capital gains to 15 percent will increase revenue to the federal government by between $27 billion and $40 billion over five years. Eliminating the inheritance tax will keep small, family-owned businesses and farms from being broken up every generation by the IRS and would signal a rejection of the Gephardt/Mitchell politics of envy and hate that belong in the slums of the Weimar Republic—not America.

All moves toward a flat tax are progress as they put all Americans on a fair, level playing field and the politicians cannot play one group of taxpayers against another in ratcheting up all rates over time.

No one need "justify" tax cuts in the face of a $300 billion deficit. Those who spend money that belongs to the American people need to justify their action. Those who presume to steal the wealth of Americans need to justify their theft. Not mugging a citizen does not need justification. The present injustice is a parasitic government that steals 20 percent of the income of its citizens and spends 25 percent of their income.

The government has a tremendous source of revenue in the trillions of dollars of land, loans, and other assets it controls. Sell it off and drop the taxes on the American people.

There are a number of serious budget reforms before Congress: the balanced budget/spending limitation constitutional amendment, a line-item veto, the requirement of a "supermajority" to raise taxes, to name but a few. The president could also simply assert his line-item veto authority—as Senator Dole has suggested—and fight the Democrats in the courts on its constitutionality. The most comprehensive is Congressman Christopher Cox's (R–CA) "Budget Process Reform Act," which would exchange the present Budget Act of 1974 for one with real teeth and meaning.

Richard W. Rahn

Vice president and chief economist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Tax cuts are vital to reducing the length and depth of the current recession and to promoting long-term economic growth. The Economic Growth and Jobs Creation Act of 1991, introduced by Senator Malcolm Wallop and Representatives Tom DeLay and Robin Tallon, recognizes this.

If the Wallop–DeLay–Tallon initiative is enacted retroactive to January 1, 1991, a total of 1.5 million jobs could be saved between now and the end of 1992, keeping two million people from joining the ranks of the impoverished while family income could be increased by over $2,000. In addition, total economic output would be at least $195 billion higher over the next two years due to a shortened recession and stronger recovery.

Historical experience in the United States and other countries clearly shows that the only way to bring down deficits is through spending restraint and low-inflation pro-growth monetary policy, not through anti-growth tax and regulatory policies. Under President Reagan the nation experienced rapid economic growth and falling deficits, which in part were due to tax-rate reductions.

A comparison of the five-year cumulative deficit projections, found in the fiscal year 1991 and 1992 budgets, demonstrates the problems caused by President Bush's abandonment of his campaign spending-restraint promises. The FY 1991 budget projected a cumulative deficit for FY 1991–1995 of $62.4 billion. One year later, the FY 1992 budget projects a cumulative deficit projection for 1991–1995 to be a staggering $865.1 billion. How ironic that the president gave up his "no-new-taxes" pledge, only to obtain an $800 billion increase in the five-year budget deficit projection.

The best way to counteract the current recession is to adopt a pro-growth agenda. This includes the need for Bush to fulfill his 1988 campaign pledges and for the Federal Reserve Board to adopt low-inflation, pro-growth monetary policy. These policies, along with passage of the Wallop–DeLay–Tallon bill, will contribute to a shorter recession, lower deficits, and enhanced long-term economic growth.

Alan Reynolds

Director of economic research for the Hudson Institute

Investing in the hope of possibly earning capital gains in the future is not at all the same as the certainty of interest income every month, and cannot be taxed at the same rate without blockading the flow of equity capital to struggling new entrepreneurs. A minimal reform is to cap the maximum tax on capital gains at 28 percent on short-term gains, 25 percent after one year, 20 percent after two, and 15 percent after three. These rates should apply to gains on assets purchased in the past. The phased reduction of tax rates over three years offers a rough form of indexing for inflation up to 5 percent. It also avoids sudden "notches" (such as cutting the tax rate in half after some number of years), and thus minimizes the distortion of encouraging investors to hang on to inferior investments for tax reasons alone.

A lower capital gains tax will increase revenues and cut expenditures in many ways not considered by government accountants. The higher after-tax return on af-

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fected investments will be promptly capitalized in higher values of bonds, growth stock, and real estate. In addition to increasing wealth, the improved market for real estate will lower the cost of the thrift bailout, while the improved market for bonds lowers the cost of servicing government debt. The revived market for new stock issues will encourage companies to issue stock to retire debts, thus increasing taxable profits by reducing interest deductions. More frequent turnover of securities improves the allocation of capital, further increasing economic growth. Budget deficits would be at least $20 billion smaller every year, forever, as a result of any significant reduction in the capital gains tax.

The latest increase in the Social Security tax rate should be rolled back. The previous tax rate was high enough to build an adequate surplus at full employment, and the lower rate would help maintain full employment. Senator Moynihan's proposal slashes this tax rate too much, given the promised benefits, hoping to cover a small fraction of the loss by hiking the amount of annual income subject to the tax by 54 percent. Reducing the average tax on single-earner households by increasing the marginal rate on two-earner families would not be good economics or good politics. Highly productive spouses would drop out of the labor force, reducing future receipts for both the Social Security and the income tax.

The inheritance tax should be abolished, since income used to build an estate was already taxed when earned. This tax loses at least as much through avoided income taxes as it appears to add directly. Overall revenues would be greatly increased by replacing the federal estate tax with a tax on only the real capital gain on inherited assets—which is the exact opposite of current U.S. law.

Irresponsible bureaucratic accountants in charge of estimating revenues have, in effect, been dictating policy to our elected representatives out of an empty black box. It is time for Congress and the administration to gain control over nonsensical revenue-estimating procedures, rather than being controlled by them.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

President of Eagle Forum

I certainly do favor cutting federal taxes—significantly and immediately—starting with a reduction of the heavy tax burden that falls on families. It is unacceptable that about one-fourth of the average family income goes right off the top to the federal politicians and bureaucrats. When I was having my children, the average couple with two children paid only 2 percent of annual income in federal taxes; today, the average couple with two children pays 24 percent in federal taxes.

The best way to cut taxes on families is to increase the dependent child's exemption in the income tax law from its current $2,050 to $7,000, about what it would be if the exemption and the income brackets had been indexed for inflation since the 1950s. This proposal, first put forward by Eagle Forum in 1982, has since been seriously supported by such widely different groups as the 1986 White House Working Group on the Family and the liberal Progressive Policy Institute.

At the same time, I would eliminate the discriminatory Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, which is currently available only to parents who hire someone else to care for their children. (An alternative would be to "universalize" the credit, that is, make it available to all children regardless of whether their mothers are employed.) It's time to abolish from federal tax law this flagrant discrimination against full-time homemakers.

To the question, how can we justify tax cuts in the face of a $300 billion deficit, here is one answer. The phony "deficit reduction" package passed last November shows that raising taxes or keeping them high does absolutely nothing to reduce the deficit. Congress and President Bush gave us the largest tax increase in history, and the result is that this year and next we will have the two largest deficits in history.

Despite last fall's budget crisis, not one federal program has been eliminated or even curtailed, not one federal employee has been laid off, and the huge pay increase for congressmen and senior federal employees went ahead right on schedule. Some controversial programs even had their appropriations increased, and at least one new entitlement was initiated.

Those of us supporting tax cuts should not have to "justify" the reduction in federal revenues this would cause. It is the politicians who should have to justify their confiscation of so large a percentage of family income.

RICHARD VEDDER

Distinguished Professor of Economics and faculty associate at the Contemporary History Institute at Ohio University

The best measure of the government's impact on the economy is federal spending as a percentage of GNP, *not* the budget deficit. Whether that spending is financed by taxes, borrowing, or by printing money, federal expenditures crowd out private-sector activities. The mechanics of crowding out vary: higher interest rates (from deficit financing), inflation (from printing money), or lower disposable income (from taxation). Any time the Feds spend more, however, the private sector usually spends less. Moreover, there is ample evidence that, dollar for dollar, private activity is more growth-enhancing than public activity, simply because government is less efficient.

Should we reduce taxes? To me, the answer depends largely on what happens to spending. Colleagues of mine and I have argued that past evidence suggests that every new dollar in federal taxation induces $1.58 in new spending. While that figure may not be correct in the future, new taxes increase political pressures to spend. Conversely, lower taxes raise the political cost of new spending since they usually make the deficit larger in the short run, so Congress feels politically constrained in terms of new spending initiatives. Thus, I favor a tax cut simply because there is some possibility it will induce some spending reduction, permitting some needed "reverse crowding out."

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What kind of tax cut? A payroll tax would have positive, but minor, labor incentive effects, and will do less good dollar for dollar than tax breaks to enhance capital formation. Moreover, any cut favored by George Mitchell can't be all good; he is setting us up for a tax hike.

A capital gains tax reduction is desirable because it may actually be revenue enhancing and, more important, can lead to reduced expenditures. Lower capital gains taxes should become capitalized in greater real estate values, reducing the magnitude of the S&L bailout. The negative, of course, is that capital gains reduction seems like a move by members of the Grey Poupon wing of the GOP to line their already heavy pockets at the expense of the poor. It is better politically to keep capital gains rates high but to index them for inflation, lowering them effectively on long-term gains.

Most important, we should move to make the income tax more like a consumption tax by allowing more savings deductible against income. This can be done in a populist way, if politically necessary, to help the middle- or even lower-income groups that refrain from spending their entire income. Expanded IRAs are one approach, but there are others.

Tax cuts, however, won't solve the fundamental problem of federal spending out of control. The key is to change the rules of the game. A balanced budget amendment, the line-item veto, and term limitations for Congress all need consideration. Constitutionally mandated supermajority votes for any federal spending in excess of 20 percent of GNP is another idea.

MURRAY WEIDENBAUM

Director of the Center for the Study of American Business at Washington University in St. Louis and author of a new paperback edition of Rendezvous with Reality: The American Economy After Reagan

Here we go again. Of course, it's a lot of fun to write about the virtues of lower capital gains taxes and reduced income tax rates. (Like most citizens, this economist has his private agenda for reducing tax burdens.)

But it is dangerous to ignore the sad experience of 1990. Conservatives initiated the tax reform process by proposing a welcome reduction in capital gains taxation. But what did it get us?—a new set of arbitrary luxury taxes, increases in excise taxes, a 31 percent top personal income tax bracket, the phase-out of personal exemptions, a reduction in itemized deductions, and a special hit on insurance companies. Adding the proverbial insult to this injury, the capital gains tax remained uncut.

Liberals in Congress would love to repeat that performance. It enabled them to attack the party of the "rich" while voting a host of regressive tax changes hitting the poor and the middle class.

There is another compelling reason to avoid a rerun of 1990. Over the past decade, private investment and business planning have suffered from an almost endless array of changes in the tax ground rules. A few years of stability in the federal tax system would be most welcome.

We conservatives should get serious about our concern with big government and shift our attention to the spending side of the budget. Our excessive preoccupation with the revenue side results in the big spenders dominating fiscal decisions in the federal government. Why play into their hands? Why give them a free ride while we divert public attention away from their constant efforts to increase the size and power of government?

There is no shortage of ways to cut the flow of federal outlays. Merely examine the numerous programs that have outlived their usefulness, the subsidies to well-off citizens, and the aid to foreign governments that thumb their noses at Uncle Sam. Honesty compels me to report, however, that many conservative policy analysts have the attention span of a six-year-old when it comes to issues of government expenditure. Just start a discussion on reducing federal outlays and—in 10 minutes or less—they are talking about the joys of tax reduction.

Of course, it is a lot more fun to play tax reformer (and, yes, I would love to see my marginal rate decline). But, as studies by the Grace Commission, The Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, and the Center for the Study of American Business repeatedly demonstrate, there are many attractive candidates for the budget ax, or at least the fiscal pruning shears, in every department and agency. Let's get to work.

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Sony Side Up

Japan's Contributions to the U.S. Economy

Gary R. Saxonhouse

For all the harsh talk of trade tensions between the United States and Japan, the world's two largest market economies have grown closer and more interdependent over the past decade, with extraordinary benefits for the populations of both countries.

The benefits to Japan have received most of the attention. Though through the years the U.S. has forced Japan to restrict its exports here of cotton textiles, steel, color television sets, cars, machine tools, and semiconductors, the American market has been more open to Japanese consumer and industrial goods than has any other major market in the world. This access to American customers has been indispensable to Japan's emergence as the world's third largest exporter. (The U.S. and Germany alternate in first place.)

Through licensing agreements, joint ventures, and other forms of economic cooperation, Japan has frequently been able to gain access to the best of American technology—a process it has used in many industries to take technological leadership itself. Meanwhile, despite obstacles that may have limited imports into Japan over recent decades, Japanese consumers have been able to enjoy the products of IBM, Gillette, Pfizer, Otis Elevator, and many other American companies with substantial Japanese manufacturing operations.

Closer economic ties with Japan have also been good for the U.S., despite the commonly heard claims that Americans have gotten the raw end of the bargain. Indeed, although it has become commonplace recently to denigrate American economic performance in the 1980s, by many reasonable criteria Americans fared even better than did the Japanese during the past decade of close bilateral contact.

Between 1981 and the end of 1988, for example, real consumption in the United States increased by 28 percent, compared with an increase of 27 percent in Japan. And while U.S. consumption rose in the 1980s at an average annual rate of 3.1 percent, U.S. investment grew still more rapidly at 3.4 percent.

During the 1980s new jobs were created in the U.S. at almost twice the rate they were created in Japan. Employment in America rose at an average annual rate of 1.9 percent, compared with only 1.1 percent in Japan. This rapid growth in employment has by no means undermined American leadership in productivity. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) takes great pains to evaluate national economic performance on an internationally comparable basis. Notwithstanding rapid increases in productivity for the better part of a century, and spectacular success in particular industries, Japan's overall level of productivity remains even today at little better than two-thirds the American level.

America's economic performance during the 1980s is all the more remarkable because the American taxpayer during this period bore the burden of a better than 50 percent real increase in national defense spending. Closer economic ties with Japan contributed to America's 1980s boom in four important ways.

First, a massive inflow of capital from abroad, and especially from Japan, allowed Americans to finance the 1980s defense buildup without a reduction of either their capital stock or their standard of living. Second, the availability of low-price, high-quality Japanese imports, besides being a boon to American purchasers of cameras, calculators, VCRs, and countless other products, helped American monetary authorities break the back of inflation in the early 1980s.

Third, in a reversal of what used to be a one-way street, technology transfer from Japan in the 1980s has helped to revitalize many American industries, particularly autos and steel. Finally, the emergence of Japan as a major importer of manufactured goods has played an important part in America's extraordinary export-led manufacturing boom of the past few years. This market is so inviting that Japanese consumed $374 worth of American imports per capita in 1989, while Americans consumed only $360 worth of Japanese imports per capita.

The Liberation of Japanese Capital

From 1980 to 1989, the U.S. borrowed a net total of $650 billion from the rest of the world. Roughly a fifth of this net capital inflow came from Japan—over $50

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billion taking the form of Japanese net direct investment in U.S. factories and real estate, and another $80 billion in Japanese net purchases of financial instruments.

American demands for a higher standard of living, for a significantly stronger national defense, and for major increases in capital formation proved achievable in part because they went hand in hand with a dramatic shift after 1980 in the Japanese ability to hold dollar-denominated assets. Until 1980, Japan's Foreign Exchange Control Law made it very difficult for Japanese citizens or private institutions to hold assets denominated in foreign currency. This law insulated Japanese financial markets from the rest of the world and reserved Japanese savings for the exclusive benefit of Japanese corporations and governmental authorities. When the law was revised at the end of 1980, in part as a result of American diplomatic pressure, Japanese corporations, financial institutions, and households for the first time were able to meet long pent-up desires to diversify their portfolios and hold dollar-denominated assets. The revision, which also led the way for the liberalization of domestic financial transactions in Japan, was little noticed (or otherwise discounted) in the United States at the time it took place. In retrospect, few events were more important for shaping the American political economy of the 1980s.

The opening of the Japanese market to sales of American financial instruments may have lowered U.S. interest rates by as much as four percentage points from the sky-high levels that otherwise would have resulted from the American defense buildup. In consequence, Americans were able to enjoy a substantial increase in military preparedness without it coming at the expense of their standard of living or their capital stock. Indeed the maintenance and continued improvement of the U.S. standard of living might even have come at Japanese expense, as the massive sale of high-yielding American financial products in Japanese capital markets raised interest rates and curtailed investment there.

Competition from Japanese and other foreign firms has proved to be the most effective form of U.S. anti-trust policy.

End of a Golden Age

Japanese capital outflows were highest from 1986 through 1988 when the Bank of Japan followed a very accommodating monetary policy. But this policy abruptly ended in May 1989 as the Bank of Japan sought to restrain speculation in both the land market and the Tokyo Stock Exchange and raised the official discount rate for the first time in nine years.

Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

The opening of the Japanese market to sales of American securities helped lower U.S. interest rates by as much as four percentage points in the early '80s.

In light of this change in Japanese policy, the golden age of the Japanese finance of American prosperity may well have ended. A rise in Japanese interest rates of almost five percentage points in little more than two years, the 40 percent fall of the Tokyo stock market in 1990, a decline in the household savings rate, and the end of the Japanese government's budget surplus all make it more likely that Japanese investors will use more of their savings at home during the 1990s. Already Japan's net capital exports have fallen from 4.6 percent of GNP in 1987 to less than 1 percent of GNP in late 1990. And while the American public continues to be concerned about Japanese ownership of American resources, in fact, during 1989 and 1990, Japan, by liquidating past investments, has become a net capital importer from the United States.

Breaking Inflation's Back

At the macroeconomic level, the opening of Japanese capital markets did more than just provide much needed finance for the American economy. The depreciating yen, which went hand in hand with the opening of capital markets, helped to break the back of U.S. inflationary expectations in the 1980s. The early 1980s marked the first time in almost 30 years that there was a sustained decline in the price of imported manufactured goods. Between 1981 and the end of 1986, prices of imported goods fell continuously at an average annual rate of 1.1 percent—which in turn helped lower the prices of all manufactured goods in the United States. Indeed, driven by plummeting prices of Japanese computer chips the price index of all U.S. producer durables fell 4 percent from 1982 to 1990 after having risen nearly continuously for the previous 50 years.

At the microeconomic level, Japanese competitive

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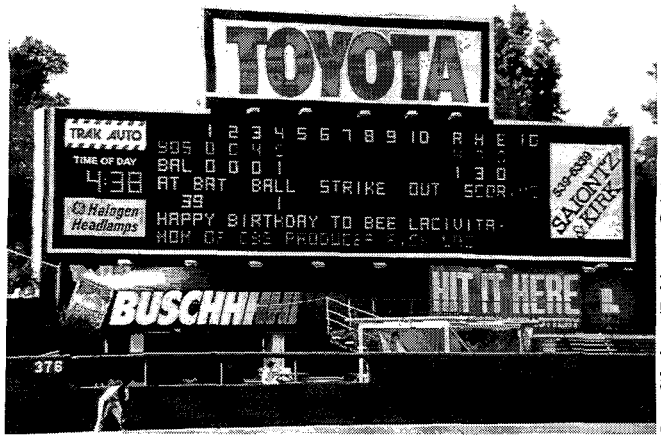

Jerry Wachter/Baltimore Orioles

Japanese cars, cameras, and VCRs have become part of the American way of life.

pressure has forced improvements in the efficiency of many areas of the American economy. Just as the deregulation of American transportation, communications, energy, and financial services has resulted in vigorous competition in hitherto complacent industries, so has competition from foreign countries destroyed artificial monopolies in U.S. manufacturing. Japanese firms have been at the cutting edge of much of this new competition, creatively taking advantage of the new opportunities opened up by the deregulation of commerce at America's borders.

Indeed competition from Japanese and other foreign firms has proved to be the most effective form of antitrust policy. Not long ago, intermediate and final goods industries in the U.S. had the power to initiate waves of cost-push inflation. Labor and management engaged in unattractive public battles, which all too often led to lengthy strikes, as part of the process of dividing up monopoly profits earned at consumer expense. These hallmarks of an insufficiently competitive economy are happily rare today. During the 1980s less that one-tenth of 1 percent of labor force time was lost due to work stoppages. Such work losses in the 1970s were three times greater.

Products Americans Wanted

During the 1980s Americans bought no less than $680 billion in imported goods from Japan. The Americans who have bought Japanese cars, cameras, calculators, and VCRs have done so voluntarily, and have presumably thought they benefitted from them. So, too, have the American manufacturers that have purchased Japanese semiconductors, steel, and machine tools. Neither the personal computer nor the software business, two of America's highest-growth industries, would have taken off as rapidly as they did without the availability of low-cost, high-quality microchips from Japan.

The continuing benefits to the American economy from Japanese imports can best be appreciated by examining the costs of protectionist barriers. The American consumer paid dearly, for instance, as a result of "voluntary" quotas on auto imports from Japan during the 1980s. According to widely respected estimates, these import restraints raised the price of Japanese cars in the U.S. by $1,000 and the prices of U.S. cars by $1,400. Put another way, auto import restraints in the 1980s annually cost American households one-third of what the S&L bailout will annually cost American households in the 1990s.

Reverse Technology Flow

Japan is now the second largest source of direct investment in the United States, after Great Britain. In the past year, Japanese enthusiasm for California and Manhattan real estate has fallen significantly as the Shuwa Company, a prominent real estate concern, and other Japanese investors have lost substantial amounts of money on American properties. Even so, the purchase by Japanese of such cultural icons as Rockefeller Center and Columbia Pictures continues to fan nationalistic fears of a Japanese takeover.

But direct investment has enriched Americans who sold properties to the Japanese, and in many cases has poured capital into American companies that needed infusions of cash. More than 350,000 Americans now work in Japanese-owned facilities ranging from Kikkoman's food processing operations in Wisconsin, to Dai Nippon Ink & Chemical's graphic arts group in New Jersey to the Green Cross-owned research and development laboratories in southern California.

Only when Japanese firms began to produce successfully in the U.S. did American firms dramatically reassess their production methods.

Far from hurting the American economy, Japanese firms operating in the United States are helping it. Despite years of rising imports of manufactured goods from Japan, it was only when Japanese firms began to produce successfully in the United States that American firms began a dramatic reassessment of their production methods. Whatever concern Japanese firms may have about protecting proprietary information, American managers in a number of important industries, such as automobiles, steel, machine tools, and electronics, have benefitted from observing Japanese methods of operation close at hand.

Just-in-Time Learning

In the 1980s, General Motors learned from its joint venture with Toyota that spending billions of dollars for high technology does not necessarily mean high performance. The American economy was saved billions of dollars of unneeded investment as GM, observing performance in its Toyota-run Fremont, California, plant, cancelled automation project after automation project.

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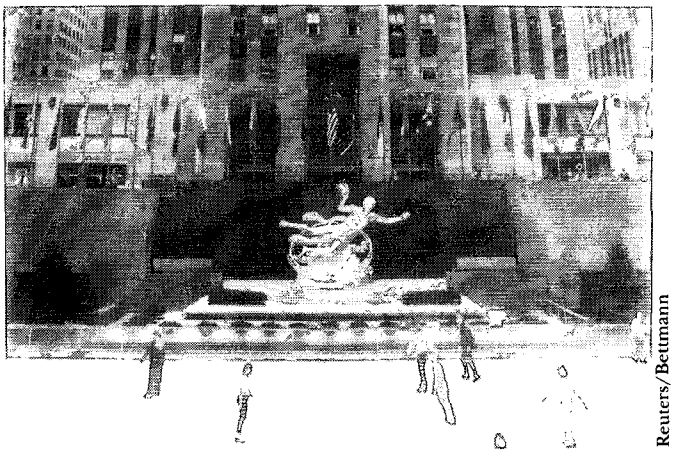
With Toyota's help it came to realize that sound management practices could often be far more cost effective than new hardware.

Nippon Denso, a major Japanese auto parts manufacturer, supplies Mazda's Flat Rock, Michigan, plant from its own American operations down the road in Battle Creek, Michigan. Mazda's long relationship with its traditional supplier, rather than sealing in Japanese technology, has promoted its transfer to the United States. Mazda, which is 25 percent owned by Ford (a share picked up on the cheap after the celebrated Wankel Engine disaster 12 years ago), manufactures Ford's Probe model for the American market. Under pressure from its long-time customer Mazda, Nippon Denso has allowed its Kalamazoo operations to be used as a training school and technology conduit for its ostensible competitors, the in-house parts manufacturing divisions at Ford.

The quality of Japanese assembler–supplier relationships, such as Mazda and Nippon Denso, has not been lost on American observers. Traditionally, General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler, when going beyond their own parts division for equipment, relied on short-period, non-exclusive contracts awarded primarily on the basis of price. Outside parts suppliers were discouraged from doing their own R&D. In the past four years observation of Japanese success in the United States, however, has resulted in a dramatic change in practice. U.S. assemblers now increasingly look to single sourcing and long-term contracts with major suppliers. With Japan's example firmly fixed in mind, major American auto parts suppliers are increasingly taking responsibility for making technological improvements in their components. Many of these improvements have been demanded by the assemblers. Many others have been forced upon U.S. auto parts manufacturers, however, by competition from Japanese auto parts companies now situated in the U.S. and eager to become original equipment manufacturers for the Big Three.

Perhaps the best-known impact of Japanese transplant practice on American manufacturing has been the widespread adoption of just-in-time methods. Spurred by the successful use of such methods in the Toyota–GM joint venture at Fremont, they have been widely adopted within the automobile industry. Auto parts suppliers report sharp declines of as much as 50 percent in the amount of space required for production and increases in overall productivity of as high as 30 percent. In the computer printer industry, NCR has been able to turn around its Ithaca, New York, plant using just-in-time methods first publicized by Japanese transplants. Following the adoption of just-in-time, NCR-Ithaca reports a drastic reduction in on-hand inventory from 110 days' worth to just 21 days. Other improvements include an 80 percent reduction in work in process and a 90 percent reduction in manufacturing cycle time. Just-in-time methods do not work for every factory, of course, but they have played a major role in revitalizing American manufacturing.

Imports into Japan from the United States have doubled over the past five years, with manufactures leading the way.



Reuters/Bettmann

Direct investment has enriched Americans who sold properties such as Rockefeller Center to the Japanese. Meanwhile some leading Japanese firms have lost big money in their U.S. real estate holdings.

Turnaround in Steel

No American industry in recent years has benefitted more from Japanese technology and Japanese capital than the steel industry. Between 1982 and 1985, the American steel industry, faced with surging imports, excess capacity worldwide, ineffective diversification, and low productivity, recorded an unprecedented $11 billion in losses. No less than 20 percent of domestic steel production was operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. Just a few years later, however, and against all expectations, conditions in the American steel industry improved dramatically. In 1988 and 1989, the industry revived to the extent of earning record profits. A restructured, if smaller, American steel industry, now benefitting from the sharp appreciation of the Japanese yen, has once again become internationally competitive in many important product lines.

While American steelmakers had been importing Japanese technology since the 1970s, it was only in the mid-1980s with the importation of Japanese management and capital that decisive changes in the industry's organization and product mix were finally achieved. In 1984, Japan's NKK Corporation acquired 50 percent of National Steel's equity. This joint venture was soon followed by new partnerships between 1) Nippon Steel and Inland Steel; 2) Kawasaki Steel and Armco Steel; 3) Sumitomo Metals and LTV; 4) Kobe Steel and USX; and 5) Nisshin Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel. These joint ventures, while putting the American steel industry on a stronger financial footing, accelerated the transfer of Japanese plant automation, computerization, and

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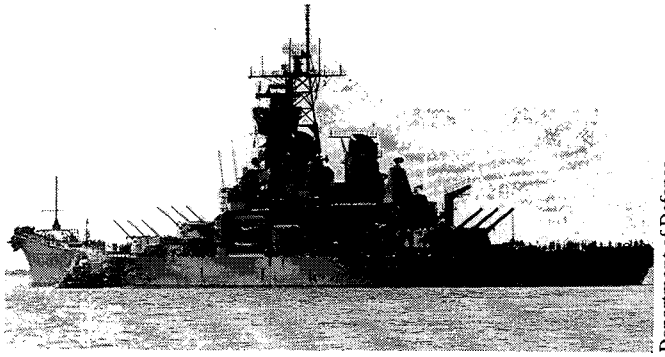

Department of Defense

The battleship USS *Missouri*. Japanese and other foreign capital allowed Americans to finance the 1980s defense buildup without a reduction either of their capital stock or their standard of living.

production control system technology. With the adoption of Japanese processing and surface-coating technology, made possible by these joint ventures, American producers have been able to compete at home and in overseas markets once again on the basis of quality as well as price.

The transfer of Japanese technology and methods through Japanese transplanted firms is not confined to manufacturing technology, to labor management, to assembler–supplier relations, or just to the automobile, computer equipment, or steel industries. It extends well beyond to areas as diverse as the conduct of research and development and the relationship between a firm and its source of finance and even to industries such as transportation services and food processing. Indeed, it has been well over a century since the U.S. economy has been on the receiving end of so much manufacturing technology transfer.

Boom in U.S. Exports

While public and private consumption and investment drove the American economy in the first half of the 1980s, exports have been the most dynamic sector of the American economy since 1986. There is every reason to believe exports will continue to play a leading role for the American economy in the 1990s.

Between 1985 and 1990 annual American exports grew by $172 billion. This is an 80 percent increase in just five years. This rapid growth in exports restored the American share of global trade to levels last achieved in the 1960s. Over three-quarters of this increase in exports was accounted for by America's manufacturing sectors.

Japan's market role in this revitalization of America's foreign trade has been largely ignored. Last year Japan imported $50 billion worth of American products. Better than 50 percent of these imports from the United States are manufactures, including chemicals, aluminum, aircraft, scientific instruments, and computers. Imports into Japan from the United States have doubled over the past five years. Sales of American products have grown so rapidly that Japanese imports of U.S. products are now 1.7 percent of Japanese GNP. This may seem small, but by contrast U.S. imports of Japanese products are only 1.6 percent of American GNP. The American market share in Japan is larger than the Japanese market share here.

Friendly Rivalry

Americans continue to have many legitimate complaints about Japanese policies. Japan's agricultural protectionism not only raises food and real estate prices for Japanese families, it is wholly inappropriate for a country that should be bending over backwards to further continued international trade liberalization. Regulatory restrictions on stores in Japan have kept down competition from Japanese and foreign retailers alike.

Japan's overall level of productivity remains even today at little better than two-thirds the American level.

High-volume retailers tend to scour the world for their products; their relative absence in Japan almost surely comes at the expense of the Japanese consumer.

These are the complaints of friendly rivals, not enemies. In sharp contrast to U.S.–Soviet relations during the Cold War, the U.S. and Japan are locked in a mutually beneficial embrace that extends from finance, trade, investment, and technology to the massive exchange of people and ideas. U.S.–Japanese economic, social, and cultural integration has benefitted both peoples. These benefits will grow as the world's two most competitive market economies become even closer. ☎

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Mocking the Middle Class

The Perverse Effects of Housing Subsidies

Howard Husock

Over the past 25 years, federal commissions of Left and Right have been critical of local housing regulations that constrain home-building, particularly building codes that mandate expensive materials and zoning codes that limit the number of homes per acre.

The Left has viewed local regulation as a wall that must come tumbling down, a tool of exclusion that limits the access of the poor and minorities to decent housing. In 1968, Lyndon Johnson's Kaiser Committee on Urban Housing called for subsidized construction of 600,000 housing units a year, many in the suburbs, but complained that "communities may use subdivision regulations and building codes to prevent sites from being used for the construction of low-cost housing. And far too many communities choose to do so....A community that has set its mind on excluding low-cost housing, or even average-cost housing on small lots or in multi-family structures, has little trouble achieving this end."

The Right, which has sought to make private markets work better, has focused on unnecessary costs that lead to higher housing prices. In 1983, Ronald Reagan's Commission on Housing devoted 10 pages to proposed changes in state and local housing regulations, arguing that these rules "can unnecessarily restrict housing choices by limiting locations where construction can occur, by driving up the cost of housing and thereby placing new housing beyond the financial reach of increasing numbers of people."

Given this assault from two fronts, one might have expected that housing regulation would have dramatically eased. Instead, exclusionary regulation has proved so persistent that Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp last year appointed a new housing panel, the Secretary's Advisory Commission on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing. The commission is due to issue its findings this spring, and early reports suggest that it, too, will call for local deregulation, this time with some teeth in the demand. The panel will likely recommend that HUD be empowered to deny new housing block-grant funds (subsidy funds to be made available under the HOME program of the 1990 National Affordable Housing Act) to states that don't exert control over local communities toward the easing of code and zoning barriers.

Even this ostensibly stern sanction, if approved by Congress, will likely have little more effect than the pleadings of previous commissions. It is not a simple matter, in the federalist system, for the state or federal government to force local government to do anything it doesn't want to do. More important, the Kemp Commission, like its predecessors, ignores an important reason why local communities are so reluctant to change their housing rules.

Thy Neighbor's Socioeconomic Status

The existence of federal housing subsidies, both for construction of low-income housing projects and for rent payments of low-income families, provides local communities with an incentive to maintain exclusionary rules. Subsidized housing may be an effective way to raise incomes or improve the accommodations of the poor. But federal housing subsidies may unintentionally provide communities with an incentive to keep regulatory burners high, even to the point of excluding some forms of lower-income housing that they might not mind at all, so as to ensure they can keep out government-operated projects. The failure of both Left and Right to empathize with this local impulse may be a key reason that calls for deregulation have fallen on deaf ears.

People care very deeply about who lives next door, down the block, or just in the neighborhood. In his 1979 statistical analysis of residential patterns in 13 American cities, the geographer Philip H. Rees found that nothing predicts who is likely to live next to whom as much as socioeconomic status: level of income, level of education, type of employment. (Race, found Rees, played a significant but lesser role.) Writes Rees: "This consistency implies that socioeconomic status is a universal sorting principle in American cities. People of like social rank tend to live together and apart from those of unlike rank. Residential areas in American cities are clearly arranged

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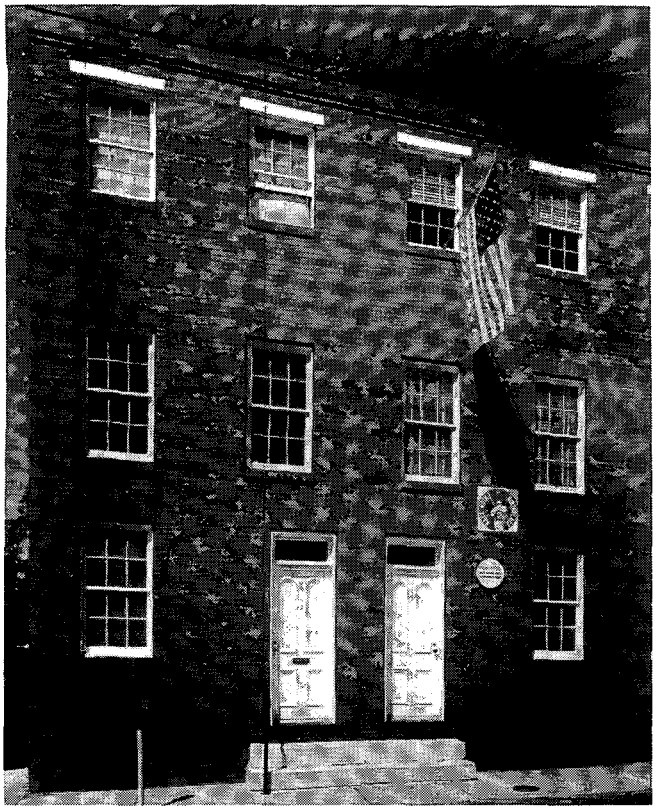

J. Brough Schamp

Babe Ruth's row house in Baltimore. The housing market offered more opportunities for lower-income families from 1880 to 1940 than it does today.

in a consistent fashion along a common and unidimensional scale of socioeconomic status."

Thus, we have an unstated, but widely accepted rule, that one's residence will reflect one's economic and educational achievements. Such a system is more than just a pattern of housing. It is a powerful part of the impulse toward self-improvement: in a society in which people believe they advance through their own efforts, such differentiated neighborhoods are logically seen as steps on a ladder of mobility.

"Better neighborhoods," in this system, are not only places where properties are more highly valued but where one can leave behind the perils of the poorest urban districts: crime, alcohol and drug use, and other behaviors that don't conform with middle-class norms. The establishment of better neighborhoods is one of the ways in which the impulse to advance economically and the hegemony of middle-class norms have been reinforced and rewarded. This is of special importance for those taking the first big step up from poverty and into the lower middle class, those who have sacrificed not only for better accommodations but for a safe, secure, pleasant neighborhood populated by others who want the same.

Breaking the Rules of Upward Mobility

Historically, commercial real estate developers have recognized the impulse toward socioeconomic stratification of neighborhoods. As the historian Ian Haberman has written, the early 20th-century developers of Shaker Heights, Ohio—a planned city with a wide range of housing types, notwithstanding its reputation for affluence—sought ways to "accommodate houses of different prices levels...without the destruction of the value of the more expensive homes. This was done by [dividing] the properties into different price sections." In the post-World War II development of Levittown in suburban Philadelphia, the developer not only assumed a preference for income stratification but gave various types of homes specific names, ranging from less-expensive "ranches" to more expensive "country-clubbers."

The advent of subsidized housing, particularly the idea of scattering housing for the poor among more affluent areas—as specifically advocated by the 1968 Kaiser Committee—challenges this system. Subsidies allow those of lesser income to leapfrog to a place among those more affluent. Historically, this has been seen as a means to improve both the accommodations and the general social environment of the poor and thereby increase their long-term prospects for self-improvement. Given the record of public housing, of course, it is far from clear that this is so. It may well be that subsidized housing, even if it is built to be safe and sanitary and superior to wooden tenements, robs the poor of the will and even the means to climb the neighborhood ladder on their own, especially if it is located in the midst of a higher-status community. From the point of view of the neighborhood asked to accept subsidized housing, however, it is almost certainly going to be seen as an ill-gotten gain, as a status reward not commensurate with accomplishment. In other words, subsidized housing breaks the rules. Thus, its introduction, or the threat of it, inspires fierce resistance, nowhere fiercer than in those neighborhoods that represent the first or second steps up from poverty—Yonkers, with its long court battle, being perhaps the most prominent example—wherein residents see their own gains mocked by construction of subsidized housing nearby.

"Prescription for Irresponsibility"

Such resistance has had a racial component that I do not defend. Racial exclusion over the decades has been a feature of the neighborhood sorting process, a history that necessitated passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act. Such exclusion has made it more difficult for blacks to move up the neighborhood status ladder, insofar as they have been denied the opportunity to buy homes they could afford. But it is not a defense of racial hatred to say that more than race motivates resistance to subsidized housing. Indeed emerging lower middle-class black neighborhoods have no more reason to be accepting of the subsidized poor in their midst than do the same kind of white neighborhoods.

Jonathan Rieder aptly describes in *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism* the fear and resentment of residents of New York's lower middle-class Canarsie section, nervous about housing projects on the area's periphery and the prospect of the influx of greater numbers of the poor: "Unrestrained giving seemed to be the signature of the paternalistic liberalism that emerged in the 1960s. It was presented as generosity but Canarsians thought it a prescription for irresponsibility. On the one hand, it confiscated the paltry surplus of

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lower middle-class bootstrappers; on the other, it showed lack of mettle by caving in to clients' demands."

Opposition to subsidized housing on the part of the less affluent who fear its siting in their neighborhoods dates to the early years of major public housing construction. In *Politics, Planning and the Public Interest,* an analysis of public housing siting issues, Martin Meyerson and Edward Banfield noted that in a 1952 vote to determine whether public housing construction would have to be subject to voter approval, middle- and upper-income precincts of Los Angeles opposed such a barrier, while lower-income voters favored it.

Profit Motive for Inexpensive Housing

Residential sorting on the basis of socioeconomic grouping began long before government housing subsidy programs. Zoning was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1926; even before its widespread introduction, private covenants and "tenement laws" kept less expensive multi-family housing out of more affluent communities. But the housing market offered more opportunities for lower-income families from 1880 to 1940 than it does today. Indeed a prominent feature of urban expansion then was what the sociologist Robert Woods called "zones of emergence"—parts of the cities and inner-ring suburbs where a variety of inexpensive housing was built: row houses (whose common walls kept costs down), duplexes, three-deckers, small "walkup" apartments. The sheer number of such housing forms is impressive. From 1880 to 1940, Philadelphia built over 299,000 row houses; Chicago, 158,000 units in four-to-nine-unit buildings; Brooklyn, some 135,000 units in two-family houses; Boston, some 65,000 units in three-deckers. Even wealthy suburbs typically had a poor side of town where servants or town employees could live. Such structures played a key social and economic role; the upwardly mobile used them to leave tenement life behind, often buying homes with the help of rental income or (if they were renters) having the security of a landlord in the same building.

Why did the impulse to keep the poor out fail to prevent these units from being built? In *The Unheavenly City,* Edward Banfield has advanced one explanation: that, as the better-off moved farther out from the city in search of larger lots, they were likely to sell their former properties not to another single-family home buyer but—because of the demand for lower-income housing—to a builder who would develop the lot far more densely and so pay a premium for it. In the normal course of metropolitan growth, writes Banfield, "as better-off suburbanites make ready to move farther out into the suburban ring in search of larger lots, they will relax zoning and other restrictions that have excluded the less well-off from suburban communities."

The Ideology of Public Housing

The gradual adjustment of the housing market to accommodate the upwardly mobile was never of much interest to the leaders of the American housing reform movement—Jacob Riis, who spread alarm over conditions in New York tenements in the 1890s; Lawrence Veiller, who led the national crusade for housing codes during the first two decades of the 20th century; and Catherine Bauer, whose 1934 volume, *Modern Housing,* made a powerful and influential case for state intervention in the housing market.

Bauer believed that the private market could not provide decent housing for any but those in the top third of income. All other groups needed state assistance, which she likened to the role of a public utility. "Houses," wrote Bauer, "are merely the next step in that increasing line of public services and utilities that now includes water-supply, street-paving, transportation and such matters." The huge wave of privately built housing of the first three decades of the century was little but a scourge, in Bauer's view. Row houses, walkups, and other such housing owned by small landlords should be supplanted by "communities planned, constructed and administered continuously as a functional unit." Foreshadowing the public housing projects built after World War II, Bauer urged that "modern housing" design should include "the super-block with indented dead-end streets." Even more pointedly, she wrote: "There is no getting around the fact that 'modern housing' and much of the framework of contemporary Western society are mutually antipathetic. The premises underlying the most successful and forward-pointing housing developments are not the premises of capitalism, of inviolate private property, of nationalism, of class distinction, of governments bent on preserving old interests rather than creating new values." Central to Bauer's housing vision was a system of public ownership enforcing a mixture of households of widely different income levels.

The failure of both Left and Right to empathize with the local impulse toward upward mobility may be a key reason that calls for deregulation have fallen on deaf ears.

Subsidy vs. Deregulation

The world of gradual housing market adjustment described by Banfield, and the vision of massive state intervention advocated by Bauer (which helped inspire federal subsidized housing programs) are in profound conflict. So it is not at all surprising that, with the spread of government-supported housing, the process of change described by Banfield was interrupted. During times of major pushes for subsidized housing—such as the late '60s and early '70s, following the Kaiser Committee's report—communities that might, under other circumstances, have permitted old estates or other large sites to be subdivided for multi-family use, have instead maintained stringent rules against such higher-density

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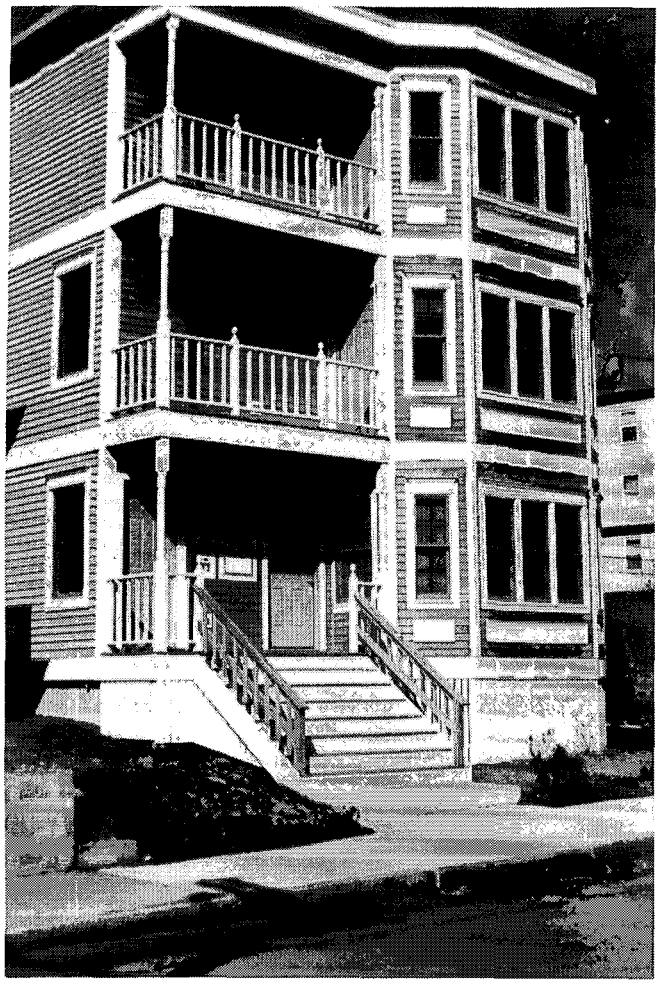

City of Boston Public Facilities Department

Boston's waiver of setback and parking regulations has led to the construction of the city's first three-decker houses since the 1920s.

uses. Communities that might be willing to admit modest, owner-occupied multi-family structures will likely feel differently about tax-exempt non-profit or public-sector developers whose mission is to rent to the very poor. If letting in the former could lead to letting in the latter (under court challenge, for instance), it is no wonder that communities have continued to bar the door—even, sadly, at the risk of barring construction of modest homes for the upwardly mobile, the children of long-time residents, or public employees such as teachers, police, or firefighters.

Even less affluent communities in which smaller homes are being built have reason to insist on single-family districts, knowing that multi-family zones may open the door to subsidized rentals. Communities will, inevitably, be most concerned about housing complexes specifically built for the poor, but their concern would logically extend to anyone whose socioeconomic status seems significantly at variance with the community norm and whose entry into the community is made possible by subsidy payments. Housing vouchers may be more efficient than subsidized construction at providing for the poor but they may not be that much more reassuring to the communities asked to accept them.

Housing deregulation and housing subsidy in many cases are on a collision course. Significant subsidy programs encourage residents of the suburbs and middle-class neighborhoods to enact tougher local legislation. Jurisdictions would be willing to forgo subsidy funds rather than lower their guard. And thus, proposals to condition housing subsidy monies on less stringent local regulation—as envisioned by the Kemp Regulatory Barriers Commission—are unlikely to be effective. Jurisdictions are more likely to permit construction of the kind of privately built housing of which the commission would probably approve—small houses on small lots, two- and three-family homes, small apartments—if they could be sure that doing so would not mean they would have to accept subsidized housing as well. (HUD might even be advised to reward communities that allow denser housing with increased community development funds.) It will be said that such housing will do nothing for the very poor. Perhaps not directly. But new places in which the rising poor could afford to live would also provide new, more attainable goals to which the poor could aspire—new, smaller steps on the housing ladder that would make it easier to climb.

The Kemp Commission's combination of subsidies and deregulation could be more effective and more easily achieved in city neighborhoods that have historically housed low- and moderate-income residents. The urban poor will continue to require some form of subsidies, because Americans have for the past century been unwilling to permit some forms of privately supplied housing. Concerns over fire safety, public health, and overcrowding make it unacceptable for the poor to be housed in dark tenements or shantytowns. This does not mean, however, that we will accept publicly subsidized housing whose location does not respect the socio-economic ladder.

Urban Success Stories

Instead, subsidies in low-income neighborhoods could finance inexpensive rehabilitation of existing housing or new construction of privately built housing, either of which could serve as the first step on the housing ladder for the upwardly mobile poor, and which will not call for long-term operating subsidies and the attendant public housing bureaucracies. We can aim, instead, toward construction of the kinds of small (perhaps very small) owner-occupied homes similar in style to those that developed in the pre-housing project era

The urban poor will continue to need some form of housing subsidy, because of concerns over fire safety, public health, and overcrowding.

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such as row houses and duplexes. Such housing has a number of advantages. It can contribute to the local tax base, as well as aid owners in climbing the economic ladder. Owner-occupants who screen tenants help hold together the social fabric in ways public housing authorities do not or cannot. They also tend to contribute their own time to maintenance, rather than having to hire help, as housing authorities must do. As Roger Krohn has noted in his study of low-income owner-occupied rental property in Montreal, owners "can maintain their buildings and keep their rents low through the cooperation of tenants on maintenance and through their own hard work and willingness to sustain a low rate of return."

In low-income neighborhoods, small subsidies to builders of smaller-scale, owner-occupied housing—subsidies that, by extension, go to the ultimate owners or tenants as well—can work in tandem with deregulation. We must be careful not to set housing standards so high that it is difficult to build cheap housing for the poorest absent large public subsidies. Examples of such subsidy/deregulation combinations can already be found. In the South End of Albany, New York, variances relaxing the minimum lot size and detached housing zoning requirements have cleared the way for 65 two-family row houses, helped along with minimal construction subsidies from the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation. The presence of a rental unit (as was common in the pre-subsidized forms of lower-income housing) is estimated to make the small attached homes affordable for landlord-owners earning as little as $15,560 annually.

In New Haven, Connecticut, the city has assigned land to developers building new two-family houses on what have been 144 vacant lots in low-income neighborhoods. Seventy houses have already gone up, again with state construction subsidies. One purchaser was able to move directly from public housing to home ownership. Deregulation and a limited land subsidy combine in a new Boston program. City waiver of setback and parking regulations, as well as city donation of vacant land have made possible construction of the city's first new three-decker houses since the late 1920s, part of an effort to encourage construction of unsubsidized, private, lower-income housing on 747 vacant "buildable" lots.

The best current example of assisting the poor through minimal subsidy coupled with significant deregulation may be Baltimore's City Homes Inc. A non-profit developer assisted by the state in raising capital at slightly below-market rates, City Homes has, over the past four years, bought 206 row houses judged to be in danger of being abandoned by their owners. The key victory of City Homes has been its ability to convince state and city authorities to provide low-cost capital and, at the same, time, allow it to undertake renovations less extensive than the gut rehab generally demanded by public agencies. Rather than spending $75,000 or more per unit for complete renovations, City Homes has done only what must be done to keep the properties habitable. This can mean rebuilding rather than replacing doors; installing a coat bar instead of a full closet; wallpapering rather than installing all new dry wall. City Homes has won permission not to install ramp access for the handicapped in all cases. It is seeking ways to minimize the danger of lead poisoning without having to completely de-lead its units, a process that can be as costly as other necessary repairs combined. The result is inexpensive housing that truly serves the poor, without the complications and expense of a public housing authority. To date, City Homes has renovated its units at a total average cost of $23,000 (including the $9,000 average purchase price) and subsequently rented them for an average of $266 a month to families that have an average income of $10,700.

Misplaced Compassion

Over the past century, and particularly since the Depression, Americans have had two general goals for our housing policy: housing for the poor that does not offend community standards or pose public safety hazards, and sufficient, moderately priced housing so that we can be a nation of home owners. We have been mostly successful in achieving the latter goal: some 65 percent of American households live in their own homes. At the same time, our approaches to solving the housing problems of the poor have created new problems. Insisting that non-poor communities have a moral obligation to accept the poor, and that those poor should be housed in buildings whose construction and/or rent rolls are subsidized by government, may have contributed to the raising of barriers against a wide array of modest forms of housing. Subsidy programs designed to help the poor have thus unintentionally encouraged overregulation that makes it harder for the upwardly mobile poor to live in better neighborhoods. To restore this opportunity, it is not enough to call for deregulation. Working-class and middle-class property owners and renters also have to be reassured that their own efforts to improve their condition will not be undermined by a compassionate state.

Suburbanites not only want to protect their property values. They want to leave behind the perils of the poorest urban districts: crime, alcohol and drug use, and other behaviors that don't conform with middle-class norms.

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MUDDY WATERS

The Quagmire of Wetlands Regulation

RICHARD MINITER

With the black waves of Boston Harbor at his back, candidate George Bush pledged that under his presidency there would be "no net loss of the nation's remaining wetlands."

Bush had swooped into then-Governor Michael Dukakis's backyard to steal the environmental vote. His green battle-cry—"no net loss"—was the brainchild of Conservation Foundation president William K. Reilly, who subsequently became Bush's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator. And in contrast to the reversal of his "no new taxes" stand, this is a promise the president has conspicuously tried to keep.

Unfortunately, the "no net loss" policy has perpetuated and worsened an absurd regulatory regime that imposes unfair burdens on landowners, while doing little to protect wetlands—marshes, bogs, swamps, mud flats, prairie potholes, and other forms of land flooded or saturated by water—of the greatest ecological importance. By mistakenly treating all wetlands as equal, "no net loss" has held up development on properties of little ecological significance. And the focus on containing loss has diverted attention from public policy reforms that would *expand* wetlands—primarily reductions in crop insurance and other federal farm subsidies, and a loosening of certain regulations.

In the name of wetlands protection, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers have punished a truck mechanic who cleaned up a tire dump in Pennsylvania, held up expansion of a homeless shelter in Alaska, penalized a farmer for plowing up a pasture in Missouri, required a forest to be levelled to compensate for wetlands lost when a highway was widened in Georgia, and temporarily stopped a Virginia county from providing clean drinking water to its residents. They have erected a system of national land-use regulation that brings minimal ecological benefits and substantial harm to the liberties of Americans.

Criminalization of Dirt

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972 makes it unlawful to put dredged or fill material into "the navigable waters of the United States" without first receiving a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers, subject to veto by the EPA. The legislation was intended to safeguard major waterways, municipal water supplies, shellfish beds, and fishing and recreational areas from contamination by toxins that might be contained in dredged or fill material. Wetlands were not defined or even mentioned in legislation that applied to rivers, streams, bays, and lakes. "It was not the original intent of Congress to enact a wetland protection statute, but a water quality act," says Bernard N. Goode, former chief of the wetland regulatory office of the Corps.

Wetlands regulation dates from a 1975 decision by the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals, *Natural Resources Defense Council* v. *Callaway*, which held that the Clean Water Act covers not only rivers but wetlands that drain into rivers. There was a certain logic to the decision, because wetlands near waterways can contain floods, filter water, and otherwise provide a measurable impact on water quality. Unfortunately the decision gradually came to be applied to isolated wetlands with no connection to waterways at all. The result is that a statute intended to protect rivers is now used to regulate all soggy land.

To make matters worse, enforcement of restrictions on the dumping of dredged or fill material has shifted from the legislation's concern with toxic wastes to a prohibition of landfill itself. "In 99 percent of the cases that the Corps regulates, there is no threat of a true pollutant getting into drinking water," says Pacific Research Institute legal scholar Mark Pollot. "Most often, the pollutant in question is dirt, and usually dirt dumped on the same land it was dug from."

Indeed in 1983, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals held in *Avoyelles Sportsmen's League* v. *Marsh* that the term "discharge" may include "redeposit" of soil from the same site. This ruling was cited in a July 1990 Corps Regulatory Guidance Letter that states: "It is our position that mechanized landclearing activities in jurisdictional wetlands result in a redeposition of soil that is subject to regulation under section 404." Almost any activity that disturbs the soil of a "wetland"—even if no genuine

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Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission

All wetlands are not created equal. Protecting the Everglades (pictured here) is more important than preserving a mud puddle.

pollutant is involved—is subject to regulation under the Clean Water Act.

Hauling an Iceberg

Officials of James City County, Virginia, recently learned just how badly regulators have lost sight of the purpose of the Clean Water Act. The county faced a crisis: its population was growing and its water table was falling. An emergency ban on well-drilling had already been instituted. And so the county wanted to dam France Swamp and build a reservoir to provide safe drinking water for its residents.

The EPA cared little about the county's impending water shortage. Damming the swamp, the EPA declared, would deposit dirt and other fill material and therefore violate the Clean Water Act, one of whose purposes was to protect drinking water. In the name of clean water, it was illegal to expand clean water supplies.

What was the county supposed to do? A lawyer representing James City County told a federal panel in 1990 that "a high-ranking official of EPA's regional office actually told me that 'hauling icebergs from the Arctic was a plausible candidate for further investigation.'"

James City County decided to fight it out in court. The EPA, the Justice Department, and several environmental groups testified against the county. U.S. District Judge John Mackenzie ruled, however, that the EPA's arguments were "nonsense." Pending appeal, James City County can now build its reservoir, though because of litigation delays it must now spend an additional $12 million.

The "no net loss" principle has added some perverse incentives of its own. A highway-widening project near Savannah, Georgia, would have eliminated about 4.2 acres of adjacent marshes. To achieve the "no net loss" goal the Georgia highway department levelled a nearby pine forest to create offsetting wetlands—surely not what ecology-minded lawmakers have in mind.

No Predictability

As regulators have lost their statutory moorings, the law has lost all its predictability. Highway builders and others involved in long-term projects often find themselves caught in a confusing web of changing rules and conflicting interpretations.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is a case in point. The Corps claims that the highway authority destroyed more than 40 acres of wetlands while building a 2.3-mile stretch of the East–West Expressway near Hampton, Virginia. The highway authority contends that only six acres were disturbed. Its environmental program manager, Melvin H. Thomas, maintains that the department filed all of the necessary forms, but that wetlands regulations changed three times in the past seven years.

The 1984 rules said that wetlands not flowing into any body of water can be altered without a permit. (In fact, a 1984 environmental impact study conducted by the Corps said that the area along the highway route included no "significant" wetlands.) The 1986 rules allowed one acre of isolated wetlands to be altered without a permit and up to 10 acres if the Corps granted a permit. The highway authority claims it received approval from the Corps. The 1989 rules, incorporating Bush's "no net loss" principle, required permits for any wetland to be converted to other uses.

The highway authority may now have to buy land and

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create new wetlands—a complicated, costly, and sometimes unsuccessful task—in order to offset wetland loss. Cost to taxpayers: estimates begin at $1 million and go much higher.

Arbitrary Definition

While wide-ranging and rapidly changing wetland regulations make life difficult for landowners, the often absurd definitions of wetlands offered by federal officials raise other questions. The legal definition of a "wetland" has proven so mutable that the law seems arbitrary, confusing, and uncertain.

Not all wetlands are soggy enough to require hip boots or even boots at all. Today wetland regulations cover virtually every piece of ground touched by some form of water. As the *National Law Journal* puts it: "woody areas, dry desert furrows, cornfields that were once marshy, all have been judged to qualify" as wetlands. Pools of spring rain or melting snow are wetlands. Arctic tundra are wetlands. Even deserts occasionally inundated with water can be considered wetlands.

Pools of spring rain, arctic tundra, even desert can be considered wetlands under EPA rules.

The EPA briefly defines wetlands as "Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions." This definition is then spelled out in detail in a manual that is several inches thick.

The EPA's rule of thumb is that a wetland is a plot of land with at least two of the three following characteristics: it contains water for at least seven days per year, it has one of 7,000 "indicator species" of plants growing on it, and it has a hydric soil—earth that is chemically changed by water, usually with a peat, muck, or mineral base.

Unsightly Dumping Ground

This over-inclusive definition has led to countless horror stories of over-intrusive regulation.

• John Pozsgai, a self-employed truck mechanic in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, was handed a stiff fine and a three-year jail sentence after hauling away over 7,000 old tires and rusting car parts and dumping clean fill on his own—occasionally wet—property without a federal permit. Federal authorities admit no toxic waste was involved.

"The Pozsgai property along West Bridge Street is no marshy bog where snowy egrets might lay eggs. It is an unsightly stretch of hard brown soil, bordered on one side by a narrow stream where Bucks County residents for two decades dumped tires and debris illegally," wrote Howard Kurtz of the *Washington Post*. The EPA nevertheless argued that the property was a wetland because a stream, dry for most of the year except for storm water runoff, was partly trapped by the discarded junk and created several standing pools of water, and because the lot contained skunk cabbage, a common weed, and sweet gum, a common tree—both of which are among the EPA's more than 7,000 "wetland indicator species." And these indicator species include many that grow on uplands as well as wetlands.

The EPA used aerial photographs and staked out the site with a hidden camera to record Pozsgai's "crime." These photographs were used to establish federal jurisdiction (apparently, state authorities were happy to see Pozsgai clean up the place). A small stream on Pozsgai's property was supposed to jump an expressway and run into the Pennsylvania Canal, which hasn't been used for interstate commerce in over 50 years.

Pozsgai was put on trial in 1988 and found guilty of 41 violations of the Clean Water Act. Although this was his first offense, he was sentenced to three years in prison, a $202,000 fine, five years probation, and a court order to restore the property—not to what it was—a dump-site—but to pristine condition. The judge was unpersuaded that Pozsgai's fine was excessive, though his attorney showed that Pozsgai had a negative net worth and a tiny income. Pozsgai is now doing time at Allenwood Federal Penitentiary.

• When Paul Tudor Jones, a well-heeled Wall Street commodities trader, ran afoul of wetlands regulations he was socked with $2 million in fines and restitution, 18 months on probation, a binding agreement that permanently bars development of his property (thereby lowering its resale value), and a court order not to hunt game birds or waterfowl for 18 months. "That's as close as you can come to restitution for them [the birds]," ruled U.S. District Judge Frederic N. Smalkin.

Jones's crime was his failure to supervise William B. Ellen, the manager of his 3,272-acre private hunting reserve on Maryland's Eastern Shore, who was accused of filling in more than 86 acres of wetlands with dirt and other natural materials without a permit. Ellen maintains only 14 acres were affected. No toxic wastes or pollutants were used, EPA officials concede.

• Missouri farmer Rick McGown faces prosecution because he restored 150 acres of brushland to cropland. (The property yielded an unusual 150 bushels of corn per acre.) The Corps declared his land to be a wetland because it contained cattails, but closer inspection revealed these "cattails" were actually sorghum. "They are using the Clean Water Act to capture farmers' property," McGown told reporters. If McGown loses his suit against the Corps he will forfeit one-third of his farm and pay a $7,500 fine.

Wetlands rules, in the words of the *New York Times*, have created "a web that has now entangled farmers, environmentalists, and federal agencies in legal disputes across the country. About 70 million acres of privately owned farmland may be "wetlands" according to the Soil Conservation Service. What a runaway bureaucracy wants

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them to do, farmers say, is convert good cropland into bogs and marshland...with total disregard of property rights guaranteed under the Constitution."

Alaska's Big Chill

Alaska is probably the state most affected by wetlands regulations. About 75 percent of the usable land (anything that is neither a mountain nor a glacier) is considered a wetland by federal definition. Most of Alaska meets EPA's broad wetlands guidelines because the land freezes periodically—locking water beneath the surface.

Wetlands regulation blocked the planned expansion of a Juneau, Alaska, homeless shelter. It took over a year, and a lot of political arm-twisting, for the St. Vincent de Paul Society to get a permit to add accommodations for five more homeless families in its shelter, according to Paul Paradis, director of the society.

"Anytime anyone wants to do anything in Alaska, he needs a permit," says Dwayne Gibson, an assistant to U.S. Senator Ted Stevens. Building a house or laying a driveway requires a permit. Even burying the dead in Alaska may soon require federal permission. The average permit processing time in Alaska is about eight months.

In 1989 the Corps and the EPA issued a nationwide joint "memorandum of agreement" (MOA) that required mitigation for any alteration of an existing wetland, regardless of "need, societal value, or the nature or investment objectives of the project sponsor."

This set off alarms in the 49th state. "We had more phone calls [from Alaska] related to the MOA between the Corps and the EPA in the first few days than we had during the first few days after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill," says Lee Forsgren, minority counsel for the House Interior Committee.

Property-owners are severely punished for altering a few acres of wetlands by the same federal government that has itself destroyed millions of acres.

Rich Habitat

Many wetlands are important to protect. Almost one-third of the animals on the endangered species list live or depend on wetlands—including manatees, Florida panthers, whooping cranes, American alligators, and the Schaus swallowtail butterfly. Louisiana's swamps provide wintering grounds or resting areas for most of the migratory birds, including two-thirds of North American species of ducks and geese, that trace the Mississippi from its headlands to the open sea. Most of the species

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies caused 30 percent of the wetlands destruction in the lower Mississippi Valley.

prized by commercial and sport fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico depend on coastal wetlands.

Furthermore, wetlands act as natural filters for ground water, check soil erosion, and mitigate spring floods in some areas. Sediment-laden waters are filtered as they pass through a wetland, much like kidneys in a human body. Swamp plants and microorganisms use water impurities as nutrients.

Wetlands, by acting as coastal buffer zones, break the force of floods and shield the inland from powerful tides that would swallow coastlines. A mangrove swamp, for example, can absorb and dissipate a lot of a storm's energy. Trees and other plants in swamps also slow the speed of floodwater.

Wild rice, marsh hay, and hardwoods are among the commercial crops harvested in wetlands. Over $10 billion is spent every year on recreational activities in America's wetlands. Nearly 40 percent of the wild fur and hide harvested annually, as well as all of the $1-billion-per-year commercial fish and shellfish industry, depends on wetlands. Louisiana's extensive necklace of coastal wetlands makes it the largest single fishery in the country, producing (by weight) 30 percent of the nation's commercial catch each year.

Benefits of Draining

Since the Pilgrims landed, the EPA loosely estimates, the continental United States has lost roughly half its wetlands. The total loss of over 100 million acres represents an area about the size of California. The EPA also estimates that some 350,000 acres of wetlands disappear every year from the United States. The EPA estimate may be artificially high. Even so, this is an annual loss of about one-300th of our remaining wetlands acreage.

The greatest losses in total acreage have occurred in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Minnesota, and Illinois. States that have already lost the overwhelming majority of their wetlands include Ohio, Missouri, and California. Louisiana loses more wetlands every year than any other state, and accounts for 80 percent of the nation's total loss of coastal wetlands. Louisiana cedes 40 square miles a year of its coastline to the Gulf of Mexico, according to EPA estimates.

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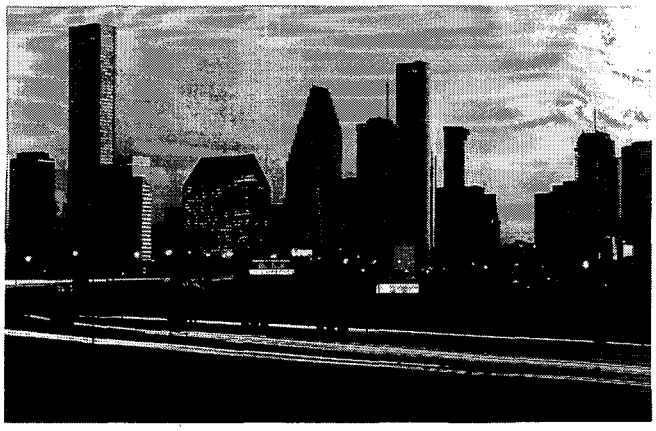

Greater Houston Partnership

Houston could not have been built under current rules. Other cities built on former wetlands include New Orleans and the Foggy Bottom section of Washington, D.C.

Wetland losses, however, are not the nationwide catastrophe some make them out to be. Alaska, according to a 1990 Fish and Wildlife Service report, has converted about one-tenth of 1 percent of its total surface area from wetland to other uses since 1780. Other regions with most of their original wetlands remaining include the Pacific Northwest, the Mountain States, and New England.

Moreover, much of the wetland conversion in our history has been beneficial. Many low-lying areas would not have been habitable during malaria outbreaks if swamps had not been drained for mosquito control—and even today wetlands can be breeding grounds for Eastern equine encephalitis, which has recently been reported in five states and is fatal in half of human cases. Mosquitoes from wetlands may disperse and transmit disease five to 50 miles from where they are hatched.

If colonists had to wait for permits to arrive from London before they could break ground, the American Revolution might have happened a bit sooner. Nowadays landowners have to await permits from Washington, D.C. But that center of wetlands regulation wouldn't have been built if current laws had applied in the 1790s. The tidal basin and much of the area surrounding Capitol Hill required significant amounts of fill to change it from a fetid marsh into a capital city. Other cities built on former wetlands include Houston and New Orleans.

Most wetland conversion in American history has been done to increase food production. Drained wetlands provide plentiful water and rich topsoil, and thereby boost crop yields. As farmers drained wetlands over the past 200 years, they provided food to a hungry, growing nation.

Wetland conversion is rarely irreversible. Almost all wetlands converted to cropland can revert back to wetlands. Nature is more flexible than man: without human interference, former wetlands will fall back into the natural cycle of wetlands creation and destruction.

Uncle Sam's Havoc

One of the great injustices of wetlands regulation is that property owners are severely punished for altering a few acres of wetlands by the same federal government that has itself destroyed millions of acres. Mammoth federal flood control projects, navigation and channelization efforts, canal building, agricultural subsidies, loans, and insurance, as well as interstate highway construction and other government development programs, have each contributed toward wetlands destruction.

Beginning in 1929, public works projects reduced the amount of sediment delivered by the Mississippi River onto the banks of its large, fan-shaped delta. The Corps repeatedly dredged the river to remove sandbars and other barriers to navigation. The river itself is walled off by miles of levees built by the Corps to protect the shore from the very floods that once nourished it. As a result of this dredging and containment, the river no longer changes course to create new wetlands. The levee system extends throughout the Mississippi Delta, meaning that silt carried by the river that once replenished the wetlands, today flows straight into the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Without the silt and nutrients provided by periodic flooding, wetlands are left to starve and erode.

A recent study by Harvard economists Robert Stavins and Adam Jaffe estimates that federal flood control and drainage projects by the Corps and Soil Conservation Service caused 30 percent of the destruction of forested wetlands in the lower Mississippi Valley. Where once there were 26 million acres of such wetlands, there are only 5.5 million acres today. About one-half of the current annual wetland loss is due to erosion caused by federal flood-control projects, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Many low-lying areas would not have been habitable during malaria outbreaks if swamps had not been drained for mosquito control.

Government flood control projects are also responsible for Louisiana's sinking coastline. For hundreds of feet down, river sediment and organic material make up the foundation of the Mississippi Delta. This ground is constantly sinking and compacting. Until federal engineers prevented the river from shifting its course or depositing new sediment, the natural process of soil compaction wasn't a problem. New sediment was simply placed upon the land that had subsided. Now 183 million tons of this sediment are annually washed out to sea.

One especially destructive Corps channelization project was the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, built in 1961 to provide a shortcut from New Orleans to the Gulf of Mexico. Since the 1960s, more than 20,000 acres of freshwater marsh have been lost to saltwater and more than 28,000 acres of land have washed away. The canal

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has widened from 500 feet to 2,000 feet as shoreline erosion progressed. Vital duck habitat has been lost.

The federal government wreaked havoc upstream, too. It constructed five large dams and reservoirs along the main stem of the Missouri River in the 1950s and 1960s. These projects destroyed nearly all of the riverbank wetlands and oxbow lakes in North and South Dakota—over 388,000 acres in all.

Criticism of federal projects that alter wetlands is not new. Marjory Stoneman Douglas in her 1947 history of the Florida Everglades lamented federal and state dredging operations that channelized and made straight the shallow, meandering streams of that unique environment. Douglas pointed out that the government made the Everglades prone to fire and to flood and inhospitable to much of its native wildlife. "Where there had been the flow of the river of grass, there were only drying pools," she wrote.

Bernard Goode, who as a young engineer was responsible for draining the Kissimmee River, which winds through the Everglades, admits the project was "an absolute mistake. When I saw the land before and after, I realized something was wrong." The Army Corps of Engineers and other government agencies are now planning to spend $700 million to undo the damage they did earlier to the Everglades.

The Army Corps of Engineers engages today in many fewer projects that destroy wetlands. And as if to atone for its past history, it bends over backwards to hold up any form of private construction on wetlands. The punishment of small-scale wetlands converters is grossly disproportionate to the harm done, and is particularly inappropriate coming from a government agency that has itself been responsible for large-scale conversion.

Farm Subsidies as Culprit

Agriculture accounts for about four-fifths of America's overall wetlands losses, with the federal government bearing a good part of the responsibility. Farmers in the 18th and 19th centuries drained swamps and marshes before federal crop subsidies. But in the 20th century federal farm subsidies have encouraged the conversion of wetlands to croplands that otherwise would not have been profitable to cultivate.

Price and income supports and loans encourage farmers to maximize production, and therefore to drain and fill in wetlands. More important, disaster payments and federal crop insurance have given farmers an incentive to farm areas most subject to the vagaries of nature. Most wetlands are bottomlands, which are very prone to flooding, so farmers are often reluctant to expose themselves to this risk. Subsidized crop insurance transfers the risk to the taxpayer. In 1987, crops on over 41 million acres were insured for a total value of $9.8 billion. A substantial proportion consisted of converted wetlands.

"Swampbuster" legislation in the 1985 farm bill makes farmers ineligible for price supports, federal farm loans, and disaster payments and crop insurance on newly converted wetlands. A recent EPA report found that cutting off subsidies to farmers who drain wetlands all but eliminated wetland conversion in six of the seven states examined. In 1986, however, the Department of Agriculture suspended Swampbuster provisions in North Dakota at the instigation of Senator Mark Andrews, a Republican who was facing a tough reelection battle. And in 1990 Swampbuster penalties were watered down for the entire country.

The Ducks Unlimited Model

Most valuable wetlands are already off-limits to developers and farmers, as a result of state laws, federal legislation to protect the habitats of endangered species, and laws protecting the fishing areas of bays and estuaries. Many wetlands are also ostensibly protected by state and national parks and wilderness areas.

However, the values sought in wetlands—recreation, water protection, biodiversity—are often best protected by private individuals and conservation foundations. A good example is Ducks Unlimited, a 51-year-old nonprofit organization of over 600,000 hunters and conservationists who want to defend duck habitat from development and farming. It has raised about $400 million to purchase and protect about four million acres of duck habitat, all of which is wetland, and has constructed over 3,000 wetlands projects.

The best way for the federal government to protect wetlands is to enforce "Swampbuster" provisions in farm legislation.

Between 1978 and 1988, the duck population in North America fell from 100 million to 66 million, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. One reason is that prairie potholes—small, water-filled depressions in Iowa, the Dakotas, and Montana, as well as the western provinces of Canada—have been disappearing. These small ponds and marshes, most of which cover less than an acre, are vital rest areas for ducks travelling along the Mississippi flyway. But farmers regard potholes as a nuisance to plow around and often plow them under instead. Ducks Unlimited has purchased many of these potholes, compensating the farmer for his troubles and safeguarding important duck habitat at the same time. Nesting ducks also need tall grasses to hide themselves and their eggs. If farmers plow up the grassy areas near wetlands, they expose the ducks to predators. So Ducks Unlimited buys these areas too.

Ducks Unlimited seeks to protect "wherever waterfowl breed, nest, migrate, or winter." This goal has led Ducks Unlimited to construct dams and dikes to assure quality habitat throughout North America. The organization also protects upland breeding and nesting sites in Canada—where some 70 percent of North America's waterfowl are hatched and raised.

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Ducks Unlimited's wetlands conservation measures help more than just ducks. Over 600 species of wildlife, including several that are endangered—the whooping crane, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, piping plover, and least tern—benefit from Ducks Unlimited wetlands.

Private Marsh Management

Natural resources companies also have a special incentive to conserve coastal wetlands, lest they lose title to their land when marshes erode and sink beneath the waves. "When wetlands give way to open water, those water bottoms become the property of the state," Shea Penland, director of the Louisiana Geological Survey, told the *New York Times*. "If you're a private landowner you face the possibility of losing your mineral rights," he says. Indeed after decades of government-sponsored degradation and destruction, the healthiest marshes in Louisiana are those managed by private oil companies.

Since 1954 the Louisiana Land and Exploration Company (LL&E), an oil and gas concern, has built and financed projects to check the erosion of marshland, reduce the salinity of the water, and slow the speed of wave action and water flow. LL&E chose strategic points in tidal channels and placed structural safeguards. This approach is called marsh management. In one area of the Pelican State, LL&E placed over five miles of weirs to shelter coastal wetlands. In all, LL&E has built more than 400 structural marsh defenses on its 600,000 acres. These weirs stop saltwater from mixing with the brackish water of the marsh and killing plants there.

It took an Alaska homeless shelter over a year to get a permit to add accommodations for five families.

Although the Corps remains skeptical of LL&E's marsh management techniques, LL&E claims there is a dramatic difference between managed and unmanaged marshland. While LL&E has been successfully employing marsh management for over 30 years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service only began studying the concept in 1990. Government researchers will create four marsh management sites of 75 to 400 acres and compare them with unmanaged sites. The study will not be completed until 1994, by which time—according to EPA figures—Louisiana will have lost another 160 square miles.

Much of what LL&E once did to preserve bottoms and washes, however, would be illegal today. "No one in Washington realized that they would also stretch their long arm so far as to stop a little old man with a shovel from repairing his dike. The same regulations advocated and lobbied by strident environmentalists have come back to haunt and destroy the very same marshes they were trying to protect," writes Ed A. Wright in *Our Land*, an outdoor magazine.

Ironically, even environmental organizations have been strangled by red tape. The Audubon Society, which owns several bird sanctuaries in Louisiana, has tried for several years to get a permit to repair a levee. "The 404 [wetlands permit regulation] was originally set up to save the wetlands, but now it's a hindrance," admits Lonnie Lege, manager of the 40-square-mile Paul J. Rainey Sanctuary. The Audubon Society has a history of lobbying for stricter wetlands laws.

Allan Ensminger, a wetlands consultant to LL&E, is more blunt: "There has been a conservation paralysis through regulation."

Restoring the Fifth Amendment

The current wetlands regime creates national land-use regulations with all the disadvantages of zoning but with none of the supposed advantages. The government has wrested a substantial amount of power from property owners with no compensation.

If the government confiscated land to set up a wildlife sanctuary or to build a water filtration plant or flood control project, any court would compel the government to pay fair compensation. This limit on state action is embodied in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. Yet, if the government gains control over the land through regulation for the same purposes, few federal agencies pay compensation. To correct this abuse and return to a policy more attuned to the Fifth Amendment, President Reagan issued an executive order compelling agencies to consider the takings issue.

A move afoot in some state legislatures would follow similar principles. A bill to provide compensation to land owners who lost a measure of their property value when state regulations denied certain land uses was narrowly defeated in the Vermont state legislature in 1990. State lawmakers will try again this year. The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has drafted model legislation to help state lawmakers limit government takings of private property. ALEC's model requires that any time the implementation of a state law causes a 50 percent reduction in the fair market value of real estate the state must pay fair compensation.

U.S. Senator Steve Symms (R-Idaho) has offered legislation consistent with the Fifth Amendment that would require federal agencies to perform takings assessments prior to enforcement of their regulations. Symms' legislative assistant Trent Clark indicated recently that support for the "Private Property Rights Act of 1991" has spread to some lawmakers who opposed it only last year. The Symms bill has also won the support of the administration, the EPA, the Corps, and the Department of Agriculture.

One Man's Wetland

Reauthorization hearings on the Clean Water Act are currently underway. Congress should abolish Section 404 of that statute and set to work writing a genuine wetlands protection bill.

The best way for the federal government to protect wetlands is to enforce Swampbuster provisions in farm legislation or, better yet, abolish farm price supports and

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crop insurance altogether—thus discouraging wetlands conversions that would not normally be profitable. Restrictions on construction and repair of coastal weirs and levees should also be eased to allow private property owners to expand wetlands.

The White House is considering a recommendation that the Interior Department be placed solely in charge of administering wetlands regulations. The Army Corps of Engineers has been so involved in wetlands destruction itself that now it overcompensates for its past excesses by stopping small-scale wetlands conversion. Congress should prevent whichever agency it puts in charge from regulating isolated wetlands, order it to rank wetlands according to importance and publish their findings, compensate owners when wetland regulations prevent their land from being developed, and respond quickly to permit applications. The permit process could be streamlined by granting blanket exemptions to development affecting less than 10 acres of wetland at a time and exempting entire states, like Alaska, which have no shortage of undeveloped wetlands. Punishments should be proportionate to harm clearly caused. Finally, the definition of wetland should be refined to include the Everglades and exclude mud puddles, irrigation ditches, vernal pools, and arctic tundra.

This is a daunting task, however. One man's wetland is another's bog. Every individual places a different value on natural objects. One man might choose to farm a wetland, while another might think it better to let it lie fallow. The law should acknowledge that wetlands are valued differently by different individuals at different points in time. Further, courts must recognize that wetlands conversion is not a crime, like murder, that all of society naturally abhors in all cases.

Wetlands regulation is out of control. Traditionally, courts and legislatures took private land only when faced with a compelling public need and, even then, the owner was given fair compensation. Under the current wetlands regime, land is taken without compelling need or compensation. This may be changing. Last July, the U.S. Court of Claims awarded over $1 million to Florida Rock Industries and over $2 million to a New Jersey developer. Both had lost their holdings through wetlands "regulatory takings." Now when regulators overstep their bounds and take private property through rule-making they may have to pay for it. Perhaps this will encourage federal officials to concentrate on protecting the wetlands that really matter. Saving the bayous of Louisiana and the Everglades of Florida, both of which have suffered from past government efforts, is too important to ignore in order to stop a farmer from plowing up a muddy cornfield.

The Bettmann Archive

Wetlands act as nature's kidneys. They filter ground water, check soil erosion, and contain spring floods.

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Fair Game

Government Benefits for the Well-to-Do

Meredith Bishop

One of the most important political issues of the '90s will be the battle over the definition of "fairness." Last year the Democrats won the first round with their tax-the-rich rhetoric. This year the Bush administration has swung a good punch with a budget proposal that targets programs benefitting the wealthy. In so doing, Bush has focused attention on some of the government programs that waste taxpayers' money as they inflate overall budget expenditures. From farm programs to Medicare, to child nutrition and student loans, the Bush budget challenges the practice of subsidizing the better off with federal dollars. Although the proposed program changes are limited in scope and will not save much money initially, their purpose is to establish the principle that the government should concentrate its help on those who need it most.

Although the budget proposal mainly targets programs that benefit the wealthy, the biggest subsidies go to an even larger group of "non-poor" individuals—the middle class. We must ultimately ask why the government should subsidize anyone who is not truly in need. Is it "fair" that the government takes from all citizens—the poor, the middle class, and the rich—in the form of taxes in order to dole out benefits to the most politically organized members of the middle class? This is redistributionist politics at its worst.

Living High on the Hog

A vision of starvation and poverty often kindles a government program, while convenience for the well-to-do sustains it. A classic example of this phenomenon is found in federal farm programs. Fed by the image of the struggling family farmer, most farm payments in reality go to the largest farms and the wealthiest farmers. Farmers with annual sales over $100,000 received 71 percent of all direct federal payments in 1989. Yet they represent only 18 percent of all U.S. farmers. Farm programs are harder to justify as farmers are making more money than ever. Only 5 percent of all farms found themselves in a vulnerable financial position in 1989, according to the Department of Agriculture, while 63 percent were in a favorable financial position. Average gross cash farm income in 1989 was $199,915 for commercial farms. After expenses, these same farms walked away with an average of $53,942 in profits.

The Bush budget proposal seeks to end federal payments to "gentleman farmers" making over $125,000 in non-farm income. A more comprehensive proposal by Representative Richard Armey (R-TX) and Charles Schumer (D-NY) to limit payments to farmers making over $100,000 in any income was killed on the House floor by a powerful farm lobby earlier this year. Opponents of the Schumer–Armey bill justified paying huge sums to wealthy farmers by saying that farm payments are a form of supply management, not income subsidies. But programs that pay farmers not to farm and artificially inflate the price one must pay for food are not justifiable by any stretch of the imagination. Is it "fair" to boost a few farmers' income so that low-income families must rely on Food Stamps to buy groceries? Although more timid than the Schumer–Armey bill, the Bush proposal, if successful, could begin to chip away at such notions.

Government programs should not make life more posh for middle- and upper-income individuals. Budget deficits are born of such excess.

The Bush budget proposal also targets the voluntary part B of the Medicare program, seeking to make the wealthy elderly pay more in premiums than the poor. The proposal would raise monthly premiums to $63.60 per person, up from the scheduled $31.80 beginning next year, for individuals with incomes above $125,000 and couples making over $150,000 per year. This change will affect only 500,000 beneficiaries out of a total of 33

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million, but is likely to come under attack by senior citizens' lobbying groups. Although some conservatives have criticized the plan for being merely another tax increase on the wealthy elderly, this is not the case as part B of Medicare is a voluntary program and anyone can opt out if they wish. The Bush proposal would mean merely that the wealthy elderly would get a smaller subsidy on their physician and outpatient services than they once did. Instead of a $1,330 subsidy per year, the wealthy elderly would receive only a $363 subsidy—still quite a bargain.

Lights Out for Rural Electrification

Many other programs not mentioned by the Bush budget epitomize wasteful spending and unfair benefits for the rich. The Rural Electrification Administration was created during the Depression to provide electricity to America's farmers. Only 10 percent of U.S. farms had electricity at the time, and private electric companies would not provide service to remote, sparsely populated areas. In 1949, REA's mission expanded to providing telephone service to rural areas for much the same reasons. Today, when over 99 percent of all farms have electricity and 96 percent have phone service, the reasons for continuing the REA are hard to fathom.

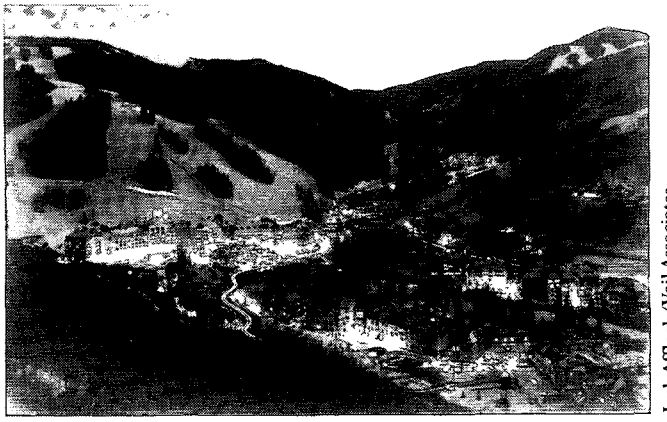
But the REA lives on, making loans at below market rates to huge telephone holding companies and power companies. Over 80 percent of REA loans go to non-rural areas. This results from REA's rule that once an area is classified as rural, it is always rural. But even in semi-rural or rural locations it is often hard to argue that loan recipients are destitute. REA loans help power such "poor, rural" communities as Aspen and Vail, Colorado. And combined profits of REA borrowers exceeded $1.3 billion in 1985. According to one REA spokesman, about 60 percent of REA loans go to Fortune 500 companies, such as GTE, Alltel, and Contel. In its continuing attempt to justify its existence, REA has even experimented with subsidized cable TV hook ups for rural areas.

Housing for Yuppies

The Federal Housing Administration's mortgage insurance program provides another example of a government program that no longer solely benefits the poor. Created during the Depression to increase home ownership for low- and moderate-income families who otherwise could not have gotten a mortgage, today over 20 percent of FHA's mortgage insurance goes to families purchasing vacation homes or investment properties. And, more than 50 percent of all FHA borrowers have incomes above 120 percent of the local median.

Congress recently expanded the ceiling for FHA-insured mortgages to $124,875, from $101,250. Another piece of legislation would have raised the ceiling even higher, to 95 percent of the median home value in one's community, which is as high as $270,000 in Orange County, California.

Proponents of these changes argue that drawing in richer homeowners will decrease FHA's default rate. But the FHA's low down payments of 5 percent or less will encourage more defaults, regardless of the value of the



Jack Affleck/Vail Associates

Like its neighbor Vail, Beaver Creek, Colorado is lit up by Rural Electrification loans.

buyer's home. A recent report by the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Actuarial Branch shows that even households making over $80,000 a year had higher default rates when they made a 5 percent down payment than households with incomes under $40,000 who paid 10 percent up front. At any rate, government-assisted home ownership is unnecessary for middle-income families considering that they already have access to private mortgage insurance.

By expanding the FHA portfolio to even better off clients, Congress has limited the insurance money available to poor people. And that pool of money is shrinking still further as a result of mismanagement. A 1989 Government Accounting Office audit disclosed that FHA insurance funds lost $4.2 billion last year, giving it a deficit of $2.9 billion. And, like its parent agency HUD, FHA has had its share of scandals. Wealthy investors buy foreclosed FHA-insured properties at below cost, selling them soon after for much profit to other FHA-insured owners. FHA often ends up issuing mortgage insurance for more than double what HUD sold the properties for just months before. FHA policies do little to discourage such abuses.

America sorely needs an intelligent redefinition of "fairness." While liberals use their Robin Hood rhetoric of taxing-the-rich-to-feed-the-poor, they ensure that the poor will get short shrift by funnelling billions to the pet projects of well-to-do special interests. That already scarce resources are wasted in this way is criminal. But even in times of plenty, fairness to all taxpayers demands that such abuses of their hard-earned money cannot be tolerated. Government programs should not make life more posh for middle- and upper-income individuals. Budget deficits are born of such excess.

The savings from Bush's "fairness" proposal are minimal compared with an overall domestic spending increase of 8.2 percent, almost twice the rate of inflation. For every new tax dollar raised by last year's budget agreement, the federal government will spend an extra $1.97. Yet while they only address programs for the very wealthy, the Bush proposals can serve as a wedge to address the broader implications of "fairness." And in so doing, conservatives can shed light on some of the worst government abuses.

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Dismember the Alamo

How to Bring Texas Government to Size

Bernard L. Weinstein and Harold T. Gross

Over the past 15 years, the state of Texas has moved from boom to bust to perestroika. The years 1976 through 1981 marked a time of unprecedented economic expansion—as population, employment, income, business startups, bank deposits, and retail sales grew at three to five times the national average. By contrast, from 1982 to 1987 the state lost 25 percent of its basic employment in oil and gas, manufacturing, and construction, while its per capita personal income fell from 3 percent above the national average to 10 percent below, and business failures rose to their highest level since the Great Depression.

But since 1987 a dramatic recovery and restructuring has been under way. By early 1991 payroll employment had risen to an all-time high of 6.9 million while unemployment had fallen to 5.7 percent from more than 9 percent three years earlier. A diversification into new industries such as electronics, telecommunications, computer software, and business services gives strong testimony to the adaptability of Texas's entrepreneurial culture.

The Lone Star economy is nevertheless suffering from two Texas-sized problems in its political system. The competitiveness and efficiency of Texas's industries are sharply penalized by excessive state regulation and by courts that have allowed tort judgments to run wildly out of control. At the same time, a failure to provide sufficient educational opportunities and government services to Texas's substantial poverty population endangers the state's efforts to transform itself from an economy based on energy and agriculture to one based on advanced manufacturing and related services.

In short, the government of Texas is at once overly intrusive and considerably underdeveloped. It needs a major dose of deregulation and tort reform and, without repeating the mistakes of many state and city governments that simply throw money at social problems, it needs to make greater investments in the human capital of its citizens.

Archaic Populism

Despite considerable lip service to free enterprise, Texas's economy is hampered by an intrusive regulatory and legal environment badly out of sync with trends nationally and in other states.

Since the populist era of the turn of the century, Texas politicians have found it to their advantage to be "against the special interests." In the name of protecting small business and competition, the populist tradition has frequently led to policies restricting the freedom of enterprises to offer goods and services at lower prices.

In most of the rest of the country such regulation has come to be regarded as harmful to consumers and competitiveness. Both the American consumers and the economy as a whole have benefitted enormously from the substantial deregulation of interstate commerce over the past 15 years. Today interstate airfares, freight rates, telephone calls, and business and consumer financial products are substantially less expensive as a result of heightened competition.

In Texas, the economic deregulation of intrastate commerce has proceeded much more slowly, particularly in such key industries as trucking, telecommunications, and investor-owned utilities. As a result, businesses and consumers in Texas now face higher regulatory costs than competing locations whose regulatory climates have adapted to the prevailing national norms.

Trucking is perhaps the most egregious example of regulatory distortion. Detailed rate schedules, a costly and prolonged permitting process, and other barriers to entry imposed by the Texas Railroad Commission have limited competition and resulted in higher per-mile freight rates for intrastate shipments as opposed to interstate shipments. For example, it costs $609 to ship a load from Beaumont, Texas, to Texarkana, Texas, but only $296 to ship the same load from Beaumont to Texarkana, Arkansas, just across the state line. The artificially high intrastate freight rates cost Texas businesses and consumers more than $1 billion annually, and have led to the out-migration of manufacturers and distributors to neighboring states to avoid unreasonable intrastate shipping costs.

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UPI/Bettmann

While roping in runaway regulatory and litigation costs, Texas needs to provide more educational opportunities and government services to its poverty population.

In a similar vein, the Texas Public Utility Commission (PUC) has retarded competition and innovation in the provision of telecommunications products and services through cumbersome regulatory procedures that inflate costs for businesses and consumers. Worse, by continuing to regulate AT&T as though it were a monopoly, despite the emergence of strong competitors, the PUC has refused to acknowledge the degree to which federal deregulation of the interstate market has irrevocably changed the telecommunications industry.

For the past decade the PUC has also pursued "populist" policies toward the state's investor-owned utilities. Under the ruse of protecting consumers from higher electric bills the agency refused to grant adequate and timely rate relief to these companies. Many utilities have witnessed a serious erosion of their profitability as a result, and one was on the verge of bankruptcy. Poor regulation has also resulted in debt downgradings and increased borrowing costs for virtually all of Texas's utility companies, which in the long run will result in higher, not lower, electric rates for businesses and households.

Unless Texas's legislature and regulatory bodies move rapidly to bring the regulatory climate into conformity with the interstate environment and reforms in other states, current regulatory disparities will widen and the state's competitive position will worsen. What is sorely needed is a healthy dose of legislative deregulation coupled with a return to administrative practices marked by professionalism, impartiality, and realism.

Plaintiff's Paradise

Texas's civil justice environment also needs reworking. Like the rest of the nation, Texas is currently wrestling with a tort and liability crisis of incredible proportions. Ultimately citizens and taxpayers bear the costs of excessive tort claims and litigation.

Unfortunately, a number of recent events have lent credence to the view that some Texas state courts have become "tort mills." For example, in 1985 a Houston trial court found that Texaco had induced a breach of contract between Pennzoil and Getty Oil, and awarded Pennzoil $10.5 billion in compensatory damages and $3 billion in punitive damages. This verdict, upheld by the Texas Court of Appeals, forced Texaco to seek Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection because it could not obtain a surety bond in the amount of the judgment.

Texas has also developed a reputation as a "happy hunting ground" for plaintiffs, especially in product liability and workers' compensation cases. Indeed, a

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Photofest

The drag of overregulation. Artificially high freight rates cost Texans over $1 billion annually.

recent *Forbes* survey found that the nation's highest-paid plaintiff's attorneys practice in Texas.

Data from the National Center for State Courts indicate the number of tort filings in Texas trial courts jumped from 27,000 in 1981 to 46,000 in 1989, an increase of 70 percent. The "relative" likelihood of being sued also increased from 190 tort filings per 100,000 population to 270.

Texas compares unfavorably with other states in the incidence of product liability suits. According to the American Insurance Association, Texas was the *situs* for 10.3 percent of large product liability claims in 1985, despite having only 6.7 percent of the U.S. population. A product liability suit was 54 percent more likely to occur in Texas than elsewhere in the United States.

Because of an excessive number of claims and the propensity to sue, workers' compensation insurance in Texas is among the most expensive in the nation. Inflated rates stem in large part from the tendency of Texas juries to grant huge punitive damages, a practice that is encouraged by the lack of an effective cap on such awards.

Perhaps the most notorious case involved a suit against the Monsanto Company by the family of a chemical worker who died of leukemia after being exposed to benzene for five years at a Houston plant. In 1986, a Galveston jury delivered a unanimous verdict awarding the survivors $8 million in actual damages and $100 million in punitive damages. (Six months later, a federal judge ordered a new trial because the award was "so excessive that it shocks the judicial conscience" and "clearly exceeds the amount that any reasonable man could feel" was due the family.)

In the matter of judicial selection, Texas is also out of step with most of the country. Texas remains one of only nine states that elect all judges on partisan ballots, from justices of the peace to the state supreme court. What's more, Texas does not set any limits on the amount of individual contributions in judicial campaigns, and consequently law firms make sizable donations. This combination of partisan judicial elections with no contribution limits generates the impression that Texas justice can quite literally be bought. Not surprisingly, allegations of judicial improprieties have become common and are frequently publicized in the national media.

Texas's tort and liability problems, along with the current method of selecting judges, are some of the most serious impediments to business development. The state's liability statutes must be amended to provide for punitive damages only when there is clear and convincing evidence that the defendant's actions showed willful misconduct, malice, or fraud. The litigiousness of the workers' compensation system must be reduced, and for the long term Texas must move to a procedure whereby all state judges are appointed by the governor for fixed terms from lists submitted by a judicial nominating commission.

Underinvestment in People

Side by side with their populist tradition, Texas's business and political leaders have been preoccupied for decades with creating and maintaining a favorable "business climate" for the state. Traditionally, emphasis has been placed on keeping fiscal burdens relatively low in the belief that state and local taxes and spending are the primary determinants of a state's attractiveness to new and expanding businesses. For example, Texas is the only large industrial state that imposes neither a corporate nor an individual income tax. Despite several major state tax hikes during the 1980s, at decade's end Texas's per capita burden of $822 ranked it 47th among the 50 states.

Another traditional pillar of Texas's pro-business environment has been a "less is more" approach to government. As the Texas historian T. R. Fehrenbach has noted, Texans have an ethos of "rugged individualism" rooted in the attitudes of the first Anglo migrants to the state and reinforced by the harsh life of the frontier. He additionally observes that this attitude has largely survived urbanization, with Texas cities nearly as atomistic as the frontier, lacking the urban ethos more prevalent in Northern cities. This spirit of self-reliance undergirds Texans' well-known penchant for risk-taking and entrepreneurism. The flip-side of this philosophy suggests that failure results from a lack of will or effort. This attitude may help explain the state's legacy of underinvestment in human capital and social services.

More spending is needed for K–12 education, public health, malnutrition, mental health, and adult literacy.

Without question, Texas spends less on many social services than most states. For example, according to 1988 data from the U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Education:

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• Texas's per-pupil expenditures on education (kindergarten through 12th grade) totaled $3,608, approximately 15 percent below the national average of $4,243 per pupil and also generally far below the levels registered in other industrial states.

• Texas's expenditures on public welfare, at $174 per capita, ranked 48th among the 50 states and totaled barely half the national average of $344 per capita.

• Texas's per-capita expenditures for hospitals and public health totaled $59, compared with $80 for the nation as a whole.

It would be comforting to think that Texas is delivering social services more efficiently and wisely than states that spend much more on poverty and human capital programs. But a number of indicators suggest that this argument is difficult to sustain:

• Only 80 percent of Texas students graduate from high school or earn a high-school-equivalency diploma, compared with 87 percent for the nation as a whole; dropout rates are much higher for the state's rapidly growing Hispanic school population.

• Approximately 1.2 million Texas children live below the poverty level.

• Texas ranks third among the 50 states in the percentage of women who receive inadequate prenatal care and simultaneously boasts the nation's second-highest pregnancy rate for girls 14 years of age and under.

Even bleaker are conditions for the estimated 350,000 Hispanics living in the 300 or so *colonias* that dot Texas's border with Mexico. Most of these *colonias* are shanty towns lacking even potable water and sewage or waste disposal services, with poverty and infant mortality rates several times higher than the national averages.

Although South Texas, which posts the lowest per-capita income in the nation, is clearly the "neediest" region of the state, rural East Texas is also suffering from illiteracy, substandard public health, and limited employment opportunities. In addition, urban areas such as South Dallas and much of San Antonio are increasingly characterized by multi-generational poverty and a permanent underclass reminiscent of large Northeastern cities. Moreover, Texas's "needy" population is likely to grow rapidly as a result of continued in-migration from Mexico and other low-income Southwestern states.

Where to Spend More

Until recently, Texas's low level of human-services funding was tolerable in the sense that it posed no serious threat to the state's prosperity: With rising commodity prices, a booming manufacturing sector, and job growth running at 5 percent per year through the early 1980s, there simply was no compelling economic rationale for spending more on education, public welfare, or health care. But as Texas's reliance on oil, gas, timber, cattle, and agricultural products has lessened in favor of high-tech manufacturing and related services, the state's historic underinvestment in human capital has raised some daunting problems that may require higher levels of spending in selected areas.

This is not to suggest that spending more money for education and other human services will invariably improve the poor outcomes cited above. But a strong conservative case can be made for increasing the size and scope of Texas's public sector where long-term economic benefits demonstrably exceed short-term marginal costs to the state's taxpayers. Education, public health and safety, malnutrition, mental health, and adult illiteracy would appear to be priority areas for carefully targeted increases in government spending.

For example, Texas has already seen some enhancement in public school performance as a result of curricular reforms and a modest increase in state aid enacted in 1984. Standardized achievement test scores in math, reading, and writing have risen between 5 and 7 percent for 7th and 11th graders, with some of the most dramatic improvements recorded in urban schools.

A product liability suit is 54 percent more likely to occur in Texas than elsewhere in the United States.

Greater expenditures for public health, housing, and other basic needs can be best justified on humanitarian grounds. But the case for higher state spending on adult illiteracy and public education is a matter of competitive economics. At a minimum, Texas is likely to be hard-pressed to exploit the seeming economic advantage offered by the comparatively rapid growth of its population and labor force against the backdrop of looming labor shortages in other parts of the country. Employers eyeing locations in Texas may well find themselves staring at what is effectively a Third World labor force at First World prices. Why not opt for sites in Mexico instead?

To better comprehend the benefits from investing in human capital, Texas need look no farther than Tupelo, Mississippi—a pocket of economic prosperity in the northeastern corner of the nation's poorest state. Tupelo has overcome poverty, isolation, inadequate resources, and Mississippi's negative image to become home to nearly 200 manufacturing plants, a burgeoning regional medical center, and the nation's second-largest furniture mart. The key? A commitment to educational excellence, dropout prevention, and adult literacy that dates back 20 years and has resulted in a literate and productive work force whose income is 17 percent above the state average. Just recently, the Ford Foundation cited Tupelo for having the most innovative public/private educational partnership in the nation, and Tupelo has now set a goal of increasing per-pupil investment by 25 percent to become one of the 10 best school systems in the country by the end of the decade.

Holding the Courts at Bay

Not surprisingly, Texas's economic restructuring has been attended by considerable political fallout. The state legislature has repeatedly been called into special ses-

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sions to address crises ranging from tax reform to workers' compensation to school finance, all of which have important consequences for the economy, while local governments have struggled to cope with severe fiscal problems brought on by the statewide collapse in property values. Additionally, friction between state and local authorities in Texas has risen as state policymakers have shifted many fiscal and functional responsibilities to the localities at the same time the latter are seeking more assistance from Austin.

Faced with such a predicament, the real challenge for Texans is not whether a larger public sector is necessary; the state's "less is more" approach, perhaps appropriate to a rural, agrarian economy, simply is not capable of meeting the needs of a would-be modern industrial state. Rather, the critical question is whether the inevitable retooling of Texas's public sector results in a government that promotes economic growth and preserves the best of the state's frontier spirit and individualism, or in one that stultifies entrepreneurism through regulation and judicial intervention.

With tuition a mere $18 per credit hour, higher education in Texas is frequently viewed as a free good and is overconsumed.

Ironically, precisely because of Texas's long-standing resistance to social spending, the latter looms as a very real possibility. Over the past couple of years Texas's underfunding of public services ranging from mental health to prisons has repeatedly drawn the ire of federal and state courts; the most recent of such crises concerns perceived inequities in the funding of public education. Moreover, the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling upholding the prerogative of judges to order jurisdictions to increase expenditures on public services promises even wider intervention by the courts. Texas runs the risk of more government by fiat, aimed less at resolving the deep-seated problems than ameliorating symptoms.

By contrast, a willingness to invest more in human capital could give conservatives in Texas the leverage needed to effect other important educational and social services reforms. Increased educational outlays, for example, could be tied to the implementation of statewide school choice and the greater use of alternative certification programs for teachers. In fact, a precedent for such bargaining exists: Texas's 1984 school reforms, which among other things included a controversial "no pass, no play" provision, could not have been pushed through the legislature without pressure from the state's conservative business leadership led by H. Ross Perot.

Overspending on Colleges

While spending more on K–12 education and other human services, Texas should simultaneously curtail the regulatory reach of government and collar the state's "pit bull" lawyers and judges. In other words, more government need not mean more intrusive government. There are countless opportunities to reduce waste and redirect monies to higher priorities. Instead of thinking small, policymakers should commit to efficiencies that can really make a difference, such as completely eliminating some state agencies or reducing Texas's overabundance of free-standing public colleges and universities.

The Texas Department of Commerce (TDOC), a grab-bag agency created several years ago through the merger of the state tourist bureau, film commission, and other entities, and charged with promoting economic development, would seem a choice target. During its brief existence TDOC has earned a reputation for ineptitude and mismanagement, and its contributions to the state's economic health have been marginal at best. Why not instead fashion a small, flexible economic development agency in the governor's office to cut red tape and serve as an ombudsman when businesses have legitimate beefs with the state?

Similarly, Texas possesses 35 publicly funded colleges and universities, many of which simply provide students with what Milton Friedman has characterized as "a pleasant interlude between high school and going to work." In fact, Texas allocated 17.2 percent of state expenditures to public higher education in 1989 compared with the national average of 11.9 percent. Instead of diluting the value of Texas's higher education dollars, why not merge or consolidate some institutions in order to reduce overhead and governance costs? Texas is capable of supporting two, or perhaps three, first-tier universities, but not 35. At the same time, university students should be required to pick up a larger share of their educational tab. With tuition a mere $18 per credit hour, higher education in Texas is frequently viewed as a free good and is, therefore, overconsumed.

By most measures, the state of Texas has an underdeveloped public sector—indeed, so much so that the state's long-term economic competitiveness may be dangerously at risk. To ensure its future, Texas must rid itself of the vestiges of populism and craft a fiscal, legislative, and regulatory climate that is truly supportive of industrial and human development. And even conservatives in Texas must acknowledge that these goals cannot be achieved absent a modest increase in the size and scope of public expenditures.

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Supreme Court Challenge

Inside the Making of the Utah Abortion Law

Richard Sherlock

On January 25, 1991, Utah Governor Norman Bangerter broke the post-*Webster* law jam over conservative abortion policy in the states. Although several states had attempted to pass restrictive abortion laws in the past year, Utah became the first to actually take up the invitation of the Supreme Court in its *Webster* decision to pass a restrictive law that has a fighting chance at receiving approval from the high court.

As one who was deeply involved with the governor's staff and others in the passage of this bill, I believe that the story of the Utah law contains important lessons for conservatives generally, as well as lessons that are immediately relevant to other states that are considering the passage of conservative abortion legislation.

At the time of its enactment the Utah bill was the most restrictive abortion law in the country. Yet, the new law is patterned after what were once the "liberal" abortion laws of many states before *Roe* v. *Wade*, which allowed women to choose abortion in a limited number of circumstances while recognizing the right of the unborn to life. The Utah law permits abortion when the life or health (including mental health) of the mother is at risk, when the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest (reporting would take place at the time of the request for abortion), or when the fetus is likely to be born with a grave fetal defect (including Down's syndrome or spina bifida). It is deliberately written broadly to give patients the latitude to make judgments about abortion in consultation with their physicians, but the law also aims to prohibit abortions simply as a means of birth control.

Overly Restrictive First Draft

Our story begins in January 1990. The Utah legislature is a citizen legislature of part-time politicians and full-time lawyers, farmers, professors, doctors, and businessmen who meet for 45 calendar days in January and February. After *Webster*, right-to-lifers targeted conservative Utah, whose population is 70 percent Mormon, for passage of a law that could provide their celebrated "test case" to overturn *Roe* for good.

Two-and-a-half weeks into the 1990 session, a collection of 19 members of the House and three members of the Senate introduced a bill drafted by the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC). In practice it would have restricted abortions to only the most life-threatening conditions for the mother or to fetal defects so severe that the child could not survive. (This was the same bill that passed last year in Idaho, but was vetoed by Governor Cecil Andrus; a similar bill suffered a similar fate in Louisiana.) Here, as in Idaho and Louisiana, the strategy was to rush to a recorded vote, forcing legislators and later the governor to choose between the NOW (National Organization of Women) and NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) position and that of the NRLC. The pro-lifers assumed that a legislature dominated by conservative Republicans could not vote the NOW position, and that a governor who is a devout Mormon could not fail to follow suit.

Nonetheless, the pro-lifers almost immediately ran into opposition from both the legislative leadership, who did not want to rush to judgment on a matter so sensitive and controversial, and the governor, who did not want to sign a bill that he felt had no real chance at overturning *Roe*. To paraphrase the governor, tilting at legal windmills would save no lives.

Three Trial Balloons

Just as the bill appeared headed to a vote, forceful intervention by the governor's staff (including a veto threat) and arguments from former U.S. Assistant Solicitor General Richard Wilkins, now a law professor at Brigham Young University, convinced supporters to establish a committee to study the issue and propose legislation for the 1991 session.

In September, the committee floated three widely divergent proposals. The first proposal was the original bill with large sections of an unsustainable enforcement scheme dropped. For example, the original bill contained language so broad that it could be interpreted as levying six-figure fines against even clinic receptionists who scheduled abortions. The second was a slightly revised proposal that included a restrictive "mental health" provision. While still too restrictive to have a

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Public Communications/Special Affairs Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The Utah law, which supports broad health and fetal defect exceptions to its ban on abortion, reflects the decades-old position of the Mormon Church.

realistic chance in court, this proposal signaled a willingness to compromise.

Wilkins and I authored the third trial balloon. We thought that by offering two tiers of abortion restriction we could give the pro-lifers their "test case" while preserving a winning hand in court. A first tier would prevent abortion for any reason except very strictly defined life, health, rape, and fetal defect reasons. If this section of the bill were ruled unconstitutional, then a second tier would allow abortion for any reason for the first 10 weeks of pregnancy. This provision, which would have a very high likelihood of being upheld, would require a frank break with the trimester framework of *Roe*. By admitting that the unborn—even as early as the 11th week in pregnancy—are deserving of protection, it would lay the groundwork for future restrictions.

The second and third proposals went nowhere. Pro-lifers refused to consider a "mental health" provision, which they saw as an open invitation to *de facto* abortion on demand. They liked our proposal even less. They felt that the Supreme Court would immediately embrace the second tier, which would, in practice, not save many lives. (Only about 20 percent of abortions are performed after 10 weeks into pregnancy.) And so the committee, which was dominated by very conservative pro-lifers, voted 11 to 3 for the NRLC-supported first proposal.

Governor Threatens Veto

This left the governor's office in a quandary. The governor had made it clear that he wanted legislation that could help overturn *Roe*. As the governor's chief of staff, Bud Scruggs, repeatedly told the pro-lifers, "We want to save lives." The governor's staff and outside legal advisers simply did not believe that the Supreme Court was ready to support such a restrictive law immediately; and the governor also wanted to ensure abortion would be available in cases of rape, incest, grave fetal defect, and threat to the life or health of the mother.

On January 11 the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints released the exact text of its decades-old statement on abortion, which supports broad health and fetal defect exceptions that are routinely left to doctors and patients to judge. In practice, most local church leaders have supported their members' decisions to abort Down's syndrome babies and have approved abortions when severe mental health *problems* are evident in the mother. The release of the statement underscored that the committee's proposed legislation was even more restrictive than the position of the Mormon Church.

In his state of the state speech on January 14, the governor announced he would veto the current task force bill, but would support a revised bill. Over the next two days the task force chairmen, legislative leaders, and the governor's office worked together to draft language on key sections. They came up with a two-tiered bill: the first tier contained the restrictive original language of the committee; if that were struck down by the courts then a second, more permissive tier, with language supported by the governor's office, would go into effect.

Battle Over Mental Health Exception

The most troublesome sticking point had always been the "health" exception. Pro-lifers were deeply suspicious of broad health language, which they saw as an invitation to doctors to certify any woman who wanted an abortion as having a "health" reason. They were doubly suspicious of "mental health" language for they rightly understood that the mental health profession has an imprecise and shifting collection of categories and conditions that would permit virtually anyone who wanted an abortion to get one with a minimum degree of counseling.

The eventual compromise included very broad health language that did not specifically mention mental health, with the understanding that it did indeed include mental health. Leaving specific language out of the bill, however, avoided unproductive and unnecessary fights with pro-life activists.

While the pro-life activists would have preferred the most restrictive proposals on the table, many also expressed a willingness to compromise. As the state vice-chairwoman of Eagle Forum, Gayle Ruzicka, said: "I started out asking for the life of the mother only, knowing full well we would not get it. But we support this bill wholeheartedly."

Representative Gary Montgomery, the then-Speaker of the Idaho House of Representatives and a leader in last year's effort to pass the Idaho abortion law, believes that if Idaho right-to-lifers had been willing to compromise in the way that those in Utah did, the chances of obtaining a signature from Idaho Governor Cecil Andrus would have risen "fairly and dramatically."

On Tuesday, January 22, the Senate passed the two-

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tiered bill by 23 to 4, with two absences. Five Democrats supported it and four voted against.

Disorder in the House

At this point the measure went to the House, where the issues were murkier. Some House conservatives sought to revive the eight-to-10 week "window" proposal for the second tier to make more likely a winning challenge to *Roe* v. *Wade*. Supporters had a clear majority for the Senate version of the bill, but wanted to pick up votes and reassure moderates who were scared about spending taxpayers' money on a losing court case. Although Wilkins and I, among others, lobbied for the "window" idea as a pragmatic move, it was again quickly scuttled.

For reasons noted earlier, pro-lifers hated the idea. More important, the governor did not like it. Although his staff thought it had merit as a legal strategy, the governor did not want to sign a bill that had provisions that he thought were morally unsound. Because he believes that women must have the right to choose abortion in a limited range of circumstances, he thought the first tier too restrictive. But, he also believes that abortion for reasons that are completely frivolous or self-serving is immoral at any point in the pregnancy. And so he, too, rejected the "window" provision.

As the debate over the language and strategy of the second tier continued, pro-life forces were at work. On January 23, the pro-lifers held their annual rally at the Capitol where Utah's new Democratic U.S. congressman from the third district, Bill Orton, gave a powerful endorsement of the pro-life cause. Orton's talk may have made it easier for Democrats in the State House to vote their conscience and support pro-life legislation.

Abandonment of Two-Tiered Approach

On Thursday, the 24th, the House deleted the restrictive first tier of the bill, leaving only the original broad provisions of the second, which in large part had been drafted by the governor's office. Such a revision had both a moral and political dimension. Politically it picked up votes from moderates and Democrats while costing only one conservative vote. Morally, many members agreed with the governor that women and physicians should be allowed to make admittedly imprecise decisions about health risks and the bearing of handicapped children and that these were issues best left to individuals. The restrictive first tier of the Senate bill had put the state on record as really preferring more intrusion in these matters than many members thought was either morally sound or politically sellable. The House passed the new bill 53 to 20. Ten Democrats voted to support it. This included two of the top three leaders in the House, one of whom had been the state AFL–CIO candidate for party chairman two years earlier.

On Friday morning the Senate agreed to the House's version and the governor signed the bill later that day. The next day, January 26, pro-choice forces held a rally that they had been planning for more than a month. It was well attended and the speeches were forceful, but they were a day late.

Recent press reports have suggested that a woman or her physician could be prosecuted for murder under Utah abortion law. This view, sponsored by the ACLU, is based upon a misreading of an old law designed to avoid any intimation that a woman who miscarries (*i.e.*, spontaneously aborts) could be prosecuted for homicide. Although legal scholars generally discount the possibility of such an interpretation being sustained in court, the Utah legislature is now in the process of repealing the old law.

Mirrors Public Attitudes

The contest over abortion will be won by the side that moves from its hard-core position toward the conservative middle where most people are. The new Utah abortion law is a responsible compromise that mirrors public attitudes on abortion. Polling data on abortion shows a remarkable consistency for nearly two decades. When people are asked under what circumstances abortion should be legal, overwhelming majorities report precisely the kinds of exceptions that the Utah bill provides. Nearly two-thirds say that abortion should not be legal when a woman simply does not want a child and almost 60 percent believe that merely being a single parent or having limited financial resources is not a sufficient reason for a legal abortion. These are precisely the kinds of reasons that are no longer permissible under Utah law.

As the Republican Party heads toward 1992, a bitter fight is brewing over the party's position on abortion. Rather than becoming a battleground over entrenched absolutes, the platform can lay out the general terms of a compromise patterned on the Utah law. The principle behind the compromise is Justice O'Connor's oft-stated view that abortion involves a conflict between fundamental rights to life and liberty, a conflict that begins at conception.

The contest over abortion will be won by the side that moves from its hard-core position toward the conservative middle where most people are.

Since 1976 the Republican platform has promoted a constitutional amendment to protect the unborn. This is an unrealistic goal for now, however, if even in a state like Utah, pro-lifers cannot get the most restrictive legislation enacted. A governing pro-life majority is waiting to be created. The Utah approach suggests a way to move beyond stalemate by balancing the right of a woman to choose abortion in a limited number of compelling circumstances with the fundamental right to life of the unborn child.

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INDEPENDENT FROM BUREAUCRACY

REGULATION
REAGAN ERA
POLITICS, BUREAUCRACY AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST
Edited by Roger E. Meiners & Bruce Yandle
Foreword by Robert Crandall
THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE

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Edited by ROGER MEINERS and BRUCE YANDLE

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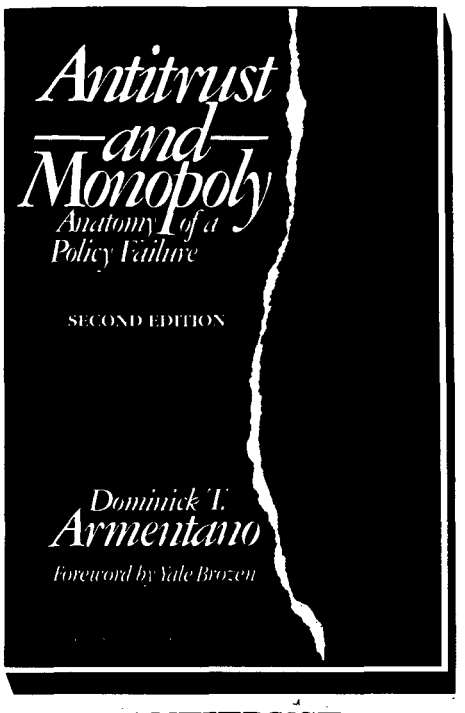

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LETTERS

Elaine N. Taylor, Patrick Groff, Nancy L. Giuliotti, Ross B. Hopkins, Lee Collins, Peter A. Waite, Stephen J. Steurer, Karl O. Haigler, Richard Rioux, Amy Moritz, Paul T. Mero, Paul M. Miller, John Lofton

Accounting for Illiteracy

Dear Sir:

Thank you for publishing the excellent article, "Why Johnny's Dad Can't Read: The Elusive Goal of Universal Literacy," by Meredith Bishop (Winter 1991).

Lack of accountability of literacy programs among the federal agencies described by Ms. Bishop is shocking. Even worse are the circumstances at the Department of Education, where a primary mission should be to address the appalling statistics on adult illiteracy in a frank, criterion-based endeavor.

The notion that computers are a desirable ingredient of literacy instruction, as the Department of Education suggests, is particularly distressing, given their cost and restriction to use by one learner at a time. Such an approach certainly relieves the "teacher" of much responsibility, however. Ms. Bishop reports that reading can be taught with almost any written materials. She is absolutely correct, of course.

Objective Measures of Success

While I do not advocate any curtailment of programs such as Literacy Volunteers of America, one-on-one programs cannot be expected to make noticeable inroads on the grave problem our nation faces. We add many more illiterates to the adult population every year than such programs can address.

The Department of Education's encouragement of expensive materials and application of "recent trends" dismays me. Using such criteria to fund grants without any requirement for obtaining effectiveness data is maddening. I am compelled to ask, "Aren't there any *scientists* in the department?" Not only should there be tests of grade-level improvement, but comparisons should be made between programs with such expensive elements and other less costly programs.

Senator Paul Simon and Representative Thomas Sawyer (and more recently Senator Edward Kennedy) undoubtedly have laudable intentions in proposing their respective pieces of legislation. Yet, if their proposals result in providing funding without any requirements for accountability, a serious question should be raised about the use of public funds. While effectiveness of some federal programs may be difficult to assess, reading is not among them. Standardized tests have been available for decades.

The proposed legislation I have reviewed, S. 1310, seems to suggest development of measures to determine how good a program "looks." Panels of experts, program deliverers, and students may all be asked what they think about a program through questionnaires, open-ended statements, rating scales, and other techniques. These largely subjective measures are often weighted by the cosmetics of a program, such as an eye-appealing, professional-looking format or some gimmick that may not be related to literacy instruction; and for the greater part, they are not quantifiable.

No matter how glowingly experts, teachers, or learners view a particular program, the bottom line is and must be how much gain the students made in their literacy skills.

That Simon and Sawyer propose building up another bureaucracy, perhaps to the level of a cabinet post, (a Literacy Czar this time?) is disheartening. The potential for enormous, wasteful expenditures lies in that route. A bureaucracy will not solve the problem of adult illiteracy any more than the entrenched educational establishment, which is so rigidly fixed upon the look-say or whole-word method. The money is needed closer to the grass-roots level where reading is being taught and where documentation of results has been obtained by an outside, independent evaluation. This evaluation should be replicated in new settings with different service deliverers and should include cost/benefit analyses. It should be followed by continuing documentation as an integral part of the program to maintain quality control and to provide learners with knowledge of results.

Abuse of Tax Dollars

It is time to look back to the *tried and true* methods, as Ms. Bishop implies. Encouraging recent "trends" or "state-of-the-art" programs, expensive materials, and costly equipment such as computers, based only on assumptions that these materials must be better than techniques used in the now distant past, borders on fraudulent waste of tax money.

Elaine N. Taylor
Carmel Valley, CA

Dangers of Whole Language

Dear Sir:

Meredith Bishop's analysis of the causes and failures of reading programs for adult illiterates targets the major reasons for this lack of success. She correctly notes that reading teachers have not been held accountable for the effectiveness of their instruction. This freedom allows them to indulge in fanciful and faddish teaching methods. Outgoing president of Harvard University Derek Bok recently chastised them for this eccentric practice.

Ms. Bishop neglects to discuss the

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While effectiveness of some federal programs may be difficult to assess, reading is not among them. Standardized tests have been available for decades.

—Elaine N. Taylor

latest invitation to disaster in reading instruction that the schools are readily adopting. This radical "whole language" approach to reading instruction insists that children learn to read best precisely in the way they learned to speak. It de-emphasizes accurate word recognition, urging learners to omit, substitute, and insert words—at will. There is no sequence of reading skills that should be taught, whole language argues. All such skills supposedly are learned simultaneously.

Standardized Tests Discredited

Despite the fact that the experimental research on reading development consistently contradicts these outré suppositions, many teachers have been persuaded that they are valid. The attractiveness of whole language lies in its demand that standardized reading tests—the only means at present to determine how effective teachers are—should be abandoned.

It was not Ms. Bishop's goal to describe ways to force teachers to be accountable, *i.e.*, reduce their inclinations to chase after incongruous, spurious, and unproved methodologies. The only effective means I can foresee is to give parents the choice of schools their children will attend. With parent choice at work, the schools that use absurd and uncorroborated instructional schemes will go out of business, while those that use scientific-based methods, and objective tests to measure teachers' effectiveness, will flourish. As a result, adult illiteracy in the nation will be reduced significantly.

Patrick Groff
Professor of Teacher Education
College of Education
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA

Ingredients for Literacy

Dear Sir:

Meredith Bishop's "Why Johnny's Dad Can't Read" brings to light the illiteracy problem I believe started when school systems moved from teaching a phonics-based approach in the 1950s to the "see and say" method. With 20 percent of Americans functionally illiterate, our nation is reaping the consequences of those earlier changes.

It is true, as Ms. Bishop claims, that between 50 and 70 percent of students drop out of literacy

programs within the first few weeks. In order for adult literacy programs to succeed, I believe four ingredients must be present:

1) Students must have immediate, positive feedback, recognizing early on that they are capable of learning and succeeding. Besides coming to us with major basic skills deficits, adult illiterates bring fragile self-images hidden under years of shame and denial.

2) Students must see a relevancy between what they are learning in class and what they need to "survive" in the real world. For example, I strongly advocate teaching recovering drug addicts to read using recovery literature, young mothers-to-be to read using pre-natal and effective parenting literature, and the unemployed to read and write using the classified ads in the newspaper.

3) Pre- and post-testing of students is necessary not only to monitor progress, but to determine the effectiveness of one's curriculum. Would a physician prescribe medication prior to evaluation and diagnosis of the patient? Diagnosis of basic skills deficits, prescribing appropriate remediation, and monitoring students' progress are critical to the success of the learner and the program.

4) Most important, I believe that a successful literacy program must contain a strong phonics foundation. Teaching beginners to pronounce, read, and spell without studying the letters and sounds of the language is ludicrous!

You don't need millions of dollars to teach people to read, write, and spell. You need a caring, positive, enthusiastic teacher, a piece of chalk, pen and paper, and the sounds of the English language.

Nancy L. Giuliotti
Executive Director
Nellie Thomas Institute of Learning
Monterey, CA

Results Count in Literacy Training

Dear Sir:

Results are the only important measurement in literacy programs or any other publicly or privately funded program. Meredith Bishop is correct that most programs are concerned only with following established, if useless, teaching methods and providing jobs for literacy instructors, regardless of how little accomplishment they are able to show.

The Nellie Thomas reading program is one of the few with a proven record of success. When used in public or private schools, and most recently when used in California's state prisons, the program has a demonstrated success of raising student reading levels from 1.5 to 3.5 grades. Individual stories go far beyond these average levels.

Unless we hold public school teachers accountable for results and

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until we hold adult literacy teachers accountable for results, we will continue to have a second-rate education system, intolerably high dropout levels, and a debilitating adult literacy rate.

Ross B. Hopkins
Principal
Miller, Dyer, Hopkins
and Associates, Inc.
Granada Hills, CA

Correcting Weaknesses

Dear Sir:

Thank you for Meredith Bishop's challenging article on literacy. The bottom line is, indeed, how many people we teach to read and write.

The questions she asks are very constructive ones. Accountability, testing, and sound use of the dollars invested in literacy programs are vital elements in literacy programming. While it is important not to discourage successful literacy efforts, it is also necessary to look for weaknesses and to make every effort to correct them to improve quality and effectiveness.

I am glad to say that Laubach Literacy International and, in the United States, Laubach Literacy Action, its affiliates throughout the nation, and other programs like ours have been and are addressing continuously the issues that are described. We are using a variety of strategies, methods, materials to achieve many encouraging results.

Lee Collins
Chair, Board of Trustees
Laubach Literacy International
Miami, FL

No Easy Answers in Literacy

Dear Sir:

The questions raised by Meredith Bishop in "Why Johnny's Dad Can't Read" are important. They speak to problems that our organization is addressing in different ways. Laubach Literacy Action is developing a new tutor-training model that is not curriculum-specific, but that will give volunteers the basic training they need to tutor in whatever curriculum the local program recommends to meet the student's individual learning style. LLA is also addressing the issue of accountability by developing mechanisms that local programs may use to improve their retention rates.

As Ms. Bishop points out, "there is no easy answer" as to why illiteracy rates are so high. Nor are there easy answers as to how to reach and retain students.

Peter A. Waite
Executive Director
Laubach Literacy Action
Syracuse, NY

Massive Government Campaign Needed

Dear Sir:

Frankly, I do not think Meredith Bishop's "Why Johnny's Dad Can't Read" contributes much to the debate on the causes and problems of illiteracy. My personal training as a reading specialist and my experience over 20 years as a reading teacher and literacy program developer lead me to much different conclusions about such an elusive goal.

It is true that few adult illiterates sign up for programs and many drop out very quickly. What does one expect since most of these adults failed so miserably in school, believe that they cannot learn, and are strapped with low-paying jobs that require them to work long hours just to get by? I do not know anyone who has a solution to the problem of recruitment and retention. Until the government and private sector get together on a massive campaign complete with teacher training, volunteer recruitment and training, day-care for parents, time off during work hours to go to school with pay, and other ways to lure people into programs, we will not see much increase in enrollment and retention. The government and corporate world spend millions of dollars to send their executives to "school," but little is spent for the low-level, undereducated worker.

Phonics Not the Answer

While many literacy programs are dominated by misguided teaching methods, the suggestion that phonics is the solution is likewise misguided. Programs that have good instructional records combine many methods that fit the individual learner. Any program that relies solely on one method such as phonics, whole word, etc., will fail with most students. The trained teacher will try many methods to find which work best. We do know that whatever the method, the content of literacy lessons has to have immediate relevance and importance to the learner. Phonics is one method for learning to crack the code; phonics does not involve content and comprehension of materials and, therefore, has little relevance whatsoever to understanding what is read. And isn't comprehension the goal of reading?

The field does have a lack of accountability. But I doubt that it is because the federal (or state) government emphasizes the amount spent over what is taught. I have been administering federal- and state-funded programs for years and the funding is meager. Where in the world is Ms. Bishop writing from? Adult education programs are usually run on shoestrings—a combination of ill-trained volunteers, part-time teachers with little or no training in adult education, back rooms

Unless we hold public school teachers and adult literacy teachers accountable for results, we will continue to have a second-rate education system, intolerably high dropout levels, and a debilitating adult literacy rate.

—Ross B. Hopkins

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in libraries and churches, day rooms in jails, evening programs in elementary and secondary schools, mixed in with a lot of often misguided good will. The federal government urges

accountability and requires programs to report on student enrollment and progress. Yet the total amount of U.S. Department of Education funding for adult education wouldn't pay for one squadron of planes that bombed Iraq.

Testing a Negative Experience

And the suggestion that students should be tested more is also wrong-headed. The easiest way to chase away a new student is to test him or her right away. Students come to the program not to be tested, but to learn. They already know they cannot read well. They need positive and useful experiences right from the onset. Formal testing should be secondary to teaching and used primarily as a basis for instruction, not program accountability.

Former Secretary of Education William Bennett urged more accountability. While we certainly need it in the public schools, it should not be at the expense of, or as a substitute for, training teachers to do a better job. Once better training is in place, the system can be held accountable for its product. The public schools are becoming more accountable and the drop-out rate is at least as high as it was before. So what good is accountability when it does not address the quality of instruction?

I speak for myself and do not claim to represent any position of Correctional Education Association.

Stephen J. Steurer
Executive Director
Correctional Education Association
Laurel, MD

Importance of Functional Literacy

Dear Sir:

There is much in Meredith Bishop's article with which I would take issue. For instance, the author seems to have completely missed the point of adult functional literacy—it's not so important how many adults we teach to decode (reading as defined by phonics) as how these adults are able to apply their skills to accomplish tasks pursuant to their goals, to function in society, and to develop their knowledge and potential. Ms. Bishop ignores the research undertaken by the Educational Testing Service, which has helped redefine literacy in more functional terms. This omission helps explain her reliance on grade-level gains and relegating the differences among programs to methods of teaching reading.

I was disappointed in particular that Ms. Bishop failed to mention Mississippi Governor Mabus' commitment to literacy and accountability. More funding (from federal discretionary sources) has allowed local programs to hire full-time coordinators, to hire more full-time instructors, and to expand the use of computers. By such program improvements, Mississippi literacy programs last year achieved a successful completion rate of 72 percent as compared to a 12-percent rate the year before; while increasing enrollment from 1,460 to 3,738 participants, the cost per successful completer has dropped from $2,746 to $1,358. We also have begun to develop measures of learners' proficiency levels across literacy, job training, and school-to-work transition programs.

Ms. Bishop was aware of these and other features of Mississippi's literacy initiative, but she failed to mention them. Her silence in these matters leads me to believe that she had already concluded that the thrust of her article would be the same themes of phonics and wasteful government programs that have marked conservative commentary on this issue for the past five years. As a former member of the Reagan administration and as Secretary of Education William Bennett's director of adult literacy, I believe that the advancements in state literacy efforts have been shortchanged by Ms. Bishop's broad-brushed and selective treatment.

Karl O. Haigler
Special Advisor to the Governor
Office for Literacy
State of Mississippi
Jackson, MS

A Way to Solve Drugs, Crime

Dear Sir:

At the Los Angeles County Acton and Warm Springs Alcohol and Drugs Rehabilitation Centers we administer an adult literacy program funded through the U.S. Department of Education by the Stuart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Though the program is well intended, there is no requirement to test participants at the end of training to determine levels of achievement and progress. Beyond the requirement to provide participants with 12 hours of literacy training, there is little accountability.

That we have allowed America

Bishop's suggestion that students should be tested more is also wrong-headed. The easiest way to chase away a new student is to test him or her right away.
—Stephen J. Steurer

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during the last 40 years to slide into the pit of illiteracy is a national tragedy. That we are not now mustering the resources required to pull ourselves out of the pit is even more tragic. By the grace of God, if we can only get our collective act together in this country regarding education, we will go a long, long way toward solving most associated problems like drug abuse, unemployment, and crime.

Richard Rioux
Associate Director
Los Angeles County Acton
and Warm Springs Alcohol
and Drugs Rehabilitation Centers
Acton, CA

Meredith Bishop replies:

I agree with Elaine Taylor that one-on-one literacy training cannot address illiteracy on the wide scale needed. A classroom of 15-20 students would be an ideal way to teach more illiterates, as well as provide a ready-made support group. Illiterates usually keep their ignorance a secret, and learning with others would help them realize that they are not alone, thereby helping to increase retention rates.

I also agree with Patrick Groff that whole language is a threatening new trend in education. However, I did not mention it in my article because it seemed to me that while whole language may have seized the minds of the schools of education, it has not yet filtered down to literacy training in a significant way.

Stephen Steurer typifies the adult literacy "expert" whose educational philosophy has been so detrimental to education and literacy training. He believes that no one method of teaching is correct (the "anything goes" syndrome), that testing student progress is wrong, and that a massive government effort will rid us of illiteracy once and for all. He is mistaken on all of these counts. This entrenched mindset epitomizes what is wrong with adult literacy training today.

That "no one method is best" for adult literacy teachers ensures that their students get a watered-down hodge podge of teaching methods. Mr. Steurer and others who advocate this approach typically oppose phonics teaching. They argue that content and comprehension are not contained in a phonics-based approach. But being able to read the word is the first step toward understanding its meaning. Students who are not taught the alphabet and sounds of letters—the components of phonics—are given little chance to succeed. No wonder dropout rates are so high.

Testing in the eyes of many literacy "experts" is a bothersome detail. Establishing how badly one's students are faring may jeopardize one's source of funding. But a brief, simple test will not "chase away" potential learners, as Mr. Steurer suggests, but rather will establish what their weak points are and where to begin instruction.

For Mr. Steurer and other literacy experts, chronic lack of funding poses the main obstacle to literacy training. But as I point out in my article, teaching adults to read requires no great amount of money or fancy computers. By wasting scarce funding on high-tech materials, many literacy programs limit the number of illiterates they can serve.

Functioning Illiterates

Karl Haigler emphasizes the importance of "functional literacy," a distinction I find faulty. Illiterates can certainly "function." Take John Corcoran, the millionaire developer and schoolteacher I mentioned in my article, for example. My "omission" of the Educational Testing Service's functional literacy measure was intentional.

I am sorry that Mr. Haigler feels shortchanged by my not mentioning Mississippi's literacy efforts. I did not mention Mississippi's 72 percent "successful completion rate" in my article because for Mississippi "successful completion" means that the student reached his or her personal goal—read the classifieds, balance a checkbook, etc.—*not* that those adults can read and write at an acceptable level. Individual goals are important and should be stressed by literacy programs, but to determine how successful one's methods are, a more objective measure is needed. Such a measure would include testing all students to see how far they have progressed while in the program and whether they are literate when they leave.

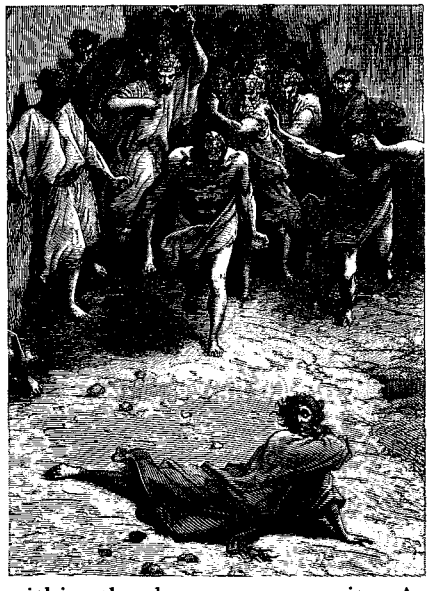
Sins of the Christian Right

Dear Sir:

Thomas C. Atwood deserves commendation for his courageous and insightful article, "Through a Glass Darkly: Is the Christian Right Overconfident It Knows God's Will?" (Fall 1990).

The Dangers of Loyalty

As comprehensive as Mr. Atwood's piece was, he touched only briefly on what he termed the "martyr-like relish" some Evangelicals have displayed in taking extreme positions that cannot possibly succeed. In general, political groups that are not willing to make compromises (even short-term, tactical compromises with persons sharing most of their agenda) tend to become embattled minority groups



within the larger community. As evidence from a variety of religious, political, and cultural situations demonstrates, the more embattled a minority group is, the more its members will value loyalty to the group. Several unfortunate developments follow. First, members begin to value loyalty to the group more than loyalty to the faith or to the ideology. Second, as loyalty to the group becomes the core value, members derive increasing utility from publicly demonstrating their loyalty. Most members soon realize that the most expedient way to demonstrate loyalty is by denouncing "outsiders," and also that one demonstrates a very pure form of loyalty by denouncing someone who deviates only slightly

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from the group's norm. The result is damaging and ironic: the attempt by members to prove loyalty can eventually mandate the group's political extinction, as natural allies are at first put off, and then become bitter enemies.

Divided They Fall

Conservatives lose many opportunities when needless animosity develops between groups that differ little on policy. Conservative initiatives are also harmed when liberals and moderates perceive the animosity and successfully use "divide and conquer" techniques.

Factional warfare will always be a part of politics. But we conservatives can minimize it by following Mr. Atwood's recommendations, understanding the group dynamics at work, and re-emphasizing coalition building.

Amy Moritz
President
The National Center for
Public Policy Research
Washington, DC

Conservatives lose many opportunities when liberals and moderates perceive their animosity and successfully use "divide and conquer" techniques.
—Amy Moritz

Compromising Principles

Dear Sir:

Thomas C. Atwood's "Through a Glass Darkly" handled a sensitive subject very well.

I agree that the Christian Right can and does offend many people by categorically rejecting a temperate rhetorical approach to persuade the public.

I must disagree with Mr. Atwood's doctrine of compromise, however. Pragmatism does not have to include compromise with the opposition. We can be flexible without caving in on principle. To say, for instance, that equal access is an acceptable substitute for a constitutional amendment allowing voluntary school prayer is to sell principle short. Yes, equal access is a nice thing, but it would still be a dream if not for those of us who insisted on voluntary school prayer.

Too often we in the Christian Right delude ourselves into thinking that pragmatism insists that we initially settle for a lesser objective. An intelligent pragmatist would beat the tar out of the other guy and only then sit down and discuss what can be achieved. If nothing can be gained from such a thrashing, then we know that nothing could have been gained. More likely, if the opposition has not acquiesced entirely, a lesser objective will be the prize.

The Christian Right should not behave like all the other politicos in this city. Our definition of "victory" is much more than winning. Theologically, our purpose is to be an instrument in the Lord's hands. Politically, it is to create and maintain a social environment that allows our theological purpose to be fulfilled.

But there is no such thing as "settling temporarily for less than the ideal" in Washington, DC, and remaining faithful to the cause. A "temporary settlement" in this town is nothing more than a respite before you lose everything.

Paul T. Mero
Press Secretary
Representative William E.
Dannemeyer
Washington, DC

Prophecy in Politics

Dear Sir:

Thomas C. Atwood's "Through a Glass Darkly" is insightful and pertinent, pointing out key deficiencies that need correcting if Christians are to meaningfully influence the public forum. His analysis of the four theological roots of common Evangelical political mistakes are spot-on, and his recommendations are both practical and relevant.

I have one small reservation, however. Mr. Atwood writes, "But one can believe in prophetic gifts and still acknowledge that they are too subjective for use as an authoritative reference in political argument—and impractical strategically because of the perplexed reactions they generate among noncharismatics." I agree with much of this sentiment, but I neither think prophecy "too subjective" nor "impractical strategically." The real issue is not whether prophecy *per se* is a defective tool in the political arena; the issue is whether Christians have a defective understanding of how to properly use that tool.

It seems incontrovertible that Scripture points to the relevance of the supernatural gifts for all walks of life—not just within the religious sphere but within the secular sphere. We need more supernatural guidance, not less, both in our personal lives and in our vocations (whether in the church or in politics). However, I agree with Mr. Atwood that there is a problem in this area of prophecy and supernatural guidance. The problem is one of misunderstanding both the nature of God's guidance and the importance of communicating the guidance we have received to the unsympathetic.

It appears to me that Mr. Atwood too sweepingly dismisses the supernatural. True, Christians have too often shot themselves in the foot because of a misuse of spiritual gifts. But just because a gun has a hair-trigger is no reason to trade it in for a club or a primitive sling-shot. The trade-off, safety for effectiveness, is not advantageous. Let's learn to use spiritual gifts correctly. Let's not throw the gun away; let's learn how to aim it.

Paul M. Miller
Virginia Beach, VA

The Meek Shall Be Trampled

Dear Sir:

The irony of Mr. Atwood's article, which purports to tell Evangelical Christians how to be more effective in politics, is that for generations

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what he suggests has been tried and has failed miserably.

In fact, in America, Christians have never been more numerous (74 percent of adults say they have a commitment to Jesus Christ) yet so powerless as they are today.

Christians have erroneously seen God's Kingdom as in the future, not now, not as a Kingdom that has already come, as Scripture tells us (Matthew 3:2, "the Kingdom is at hand" and the Lord's Prayer, which says that God's Will "will be done on earth, as it is in heaven").

In addition, most Christians have not "swung their Bibles" (since most Christians are biblically illiterate); they have used so-called commonsense arguments; they have avoided "Christianese"; and they have been mostly courteous to a fault.

Has this worked? No, it has not. According to the Barna Research Group, "People, for the most part, see the Church as an outdated institution that means well, but has little to offer a contemporary person."

Mr. Atwood rejects as a "theological error" what he calls "the triumphalist idea of Evangelical Christian rule." But Proverbs tells us: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Tell us Mr. Atwood: If God's people are not to rule, then who is?

Mr. Atwood also seems to reject the idea that Christians should seek to have in America "government by the Book," the Bible, God's Holy, inerrant, infallible Word. He says such talk has been "alarming" to some folks. Indeed such talk does "alarm" some people—so much so that our Lord was crucified because He never stopped saying it.

Lord of Politics

Mr. Atwood says that the discussion of "spiritual warfare" in political communications should be kept "to a minimum." But is this a biblical distinction? Does the political realm stand apart from this "spiritual warfare"? Is Jesus Christ, the Lord of Lords, not also the Lord of politics? Is politics a fight only against flesh and blood? No, it is not.

Ephesians 6:10 tells us that this warfare is "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

And these verses command us to swing our Bibles! As a part of the full armor of God we are to wear to fight this spiritual war, we are told (v. 17) to use "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

John Lofton
Laurel, MD

Thomas C. Atwood replies:

Religion and politics are the two subjects one is supposed to avoid in order to enjoy harmony with one's fellow man. Considering the potential controversy surrounding any critique of the Christian Right, I have been gratified by the widespread consensus of support for my analysis among conservative Christian activists, and heartened by the hope that consensus inspires for the future.

Amy Moritz is quite right in highlighting the movement's tendency toward groupthink. An "us-versus-them" mentality has often prevented Christian Right activists from noticing common ground with outsiders. And the tendency to ostracize members who "deviate only slightly from the group's norm" has been especially evident in debates over exceptions to banning abortions where charges of "not being pro-life" have been leveled back and forth.

Strategic Prudence

Technically, the dreaded "C word"—compromise—does not necessarily mean betrayal of principle, but that is just what many people such as Paul Mero assume when the word is used. To avoid this confusion, a preferable term is "prudence"—a principle with strong biblical support in the Book of Proverbs. With its emphasis on reason, shrewdness, and good judgment in conflict management and resource use, the concept of prudence highlights the important distinction, often lost on Christian Right activists in the past, between tactics and objectives. Objectives do not dictate tactics and strategy. A distinct prudential analysis is required to determine how an objective can be most quickly and reliably achieved without compromising principle in the process. This is what I meant in the article by "faithful, principled compromise"; but "prudence" says it better.

Mr. Mero makes a good point that we should not "*initially* [emphasis added] settle for a lesser objective" than the ideal. The day-care debate is a good example: splitting differences on the ABC Bill at the outset would likely have produced a much worse result. But at this stage, there is nothing "initial" about many movement efforts. It is plain to see that many objectives in many jurisdictions will not be achieved in full for the foreseeable future. In those cases, settling temporarily for less than the ideal would not inevitably lead to losing everything as Mr. Mero suggests. In fact, collecting whatever incremental gains are possible could create a public relations momentum that would be very beneficial.

In this age-old debate over whether to compromise tactically, it is helpful to note that it takes all kinds of activists to make a successful movement. As I Corinthians 12 makes clear, a healthy body is composed of many different parts, each with its own purpose for the good of the whole. For a political movement to be successful, it must have some advocates who, like the abolitionists, constantly demand the principled policy, in full, now, despite the controversy such advocacy stirs up. But the great emancipator was not an abolitionist; Lincoln was a principled, prudent politician who was careful not to get too far ahead of public opinion. He could not have achieved emancipation without the influence of the hard-core abolitionist sentiment on public opinion. But an abolitionist presi-

If God's people are not to rule, then who is?

—John Lofton

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dent could not have garnered sufficient support to preserve the Union, even with the war.

Itchy Trigger Fingers

Paul Miller makes a good point, the problem that some charismatics have had in mixing prophetic gifts with politics is not a problem with the legitimacy or relevance of prophecy itself. One could certainly argue that the Bible establishes that true prophecy exists and can have relevance to law and government. As Mr. Miller states, the biggest problem for charismatic Christians in this regard has been "a defective understanding of how to properly use the tool." But the problem is not that the "gun"—prophecy—has a "hair trigger" as Mr. Miller suggests, rather that some charismatics have had itchy trigger fingers. I could not begin to recount how many times and in how varied the contexts I have heard "words from the Lord" that were not borne out, well-meant though they were. The real thing though is, of course, good, true, objective, and relevant. Moreover, although conservative Evangelicals have been mistaken in many specific claims to prophecy, the movement as a whole *has* played a prophetic role in warning people of the moral and cultural struggle for the heart and soul of America.

John Lofton's scriptural collage demonstrates almost every political and theological error I cite in my article. Fulminations such as these help to perpetuate the negative stereotype of conservative Christian activists, despite the significant maturation of the movement.

Mr. Lofton seems to view Christians' calling to political involvement as a calling to be *crusaders*, rather than as a calling to be responsible *citizens*. The first implies that Christians are indeed capable of imposing righteousness on the people through government. But Romans 13 describes a government whose purpose is the mitigation of evil in a fallen world, not the redemption of man's sinful nature. The concept of Christian citizenship, on the other hand, can be derived from the two verses, "love your neighbor as yourself" (through promoting good law, for example) and "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" (all the more clear a command when Caesar is a government of, for, and by the "neighbors").

Another point Mr. Lofton misses is for whom this service of political involvement is intended. The crusader views it as something we do for God, as if He needs us to impose His judgment for Him. The Christian citizen enters the political process out of *obedience* to God, yes,

but *for* love of neighbor—which means love not only of his own family and church members, and not only of defenseless preborn people, but also love of the deluded homosexual, the teacher of multiple choice values, the misguided mother who would take the life of her unborn child. Too often, Christian Right "crusaders" have appeared to hate the sin *and* the sinner. While Mr. Lofton's concern about "doormat" Christianity is legitimate, one gets little sense of genuine Christian caring from his argument. Jesus commands Christians to lead with hearts of servants, not "rule" or "lord over" the people with hearts of masters.

Christian teaching holds that Jesus is "the Lord of politics," in the sense that He is providentially sovereign over everything. But does this mean that He chooses to dictate His will through the government? Does it mean He expects His people to install His Kingdom politically? Mr. Lofton suggests a far greater role for human government and politics than Jesus Himself did when He was before Pilate: "My Kingdom is not of this world," He said (John 18:36). What could be a more straightforward repudiation of Christian political triumphalism?

Lastly, while Mr. Lofton's commitment to the authority of *special* revelation is admirable, his failure to recognize the authority of *general* revelation leads him to complicate his political argument with the eternal and his evangelism with the political and temporal. Overuse of Scripture in political argument requires that before one can persuade the hearer one must first convert him to one's view of Scripture. Moreover, use of the same Bible by politically opposite Christians to publicly argue opposite views on distantly related policy issues grossly distracts from the primary and far more important purposes of Scripture, which are personal and spiritual, not social and political. Why is Mr. Lofton so unconcerned about whether conservative Christians' style and rhetoric unnecessarily alienate and "alarm" potential converts or coalition partners? Doesn't he care whether Christians' political arguments persuade and our evangelism converts? St. Paul left no doubt about the correctness of caring about results and adapting our presentation to achieve them: "I have become all things to all men," he said, "that by all possible means I might save some" (I Corinthians 9:22). ☎

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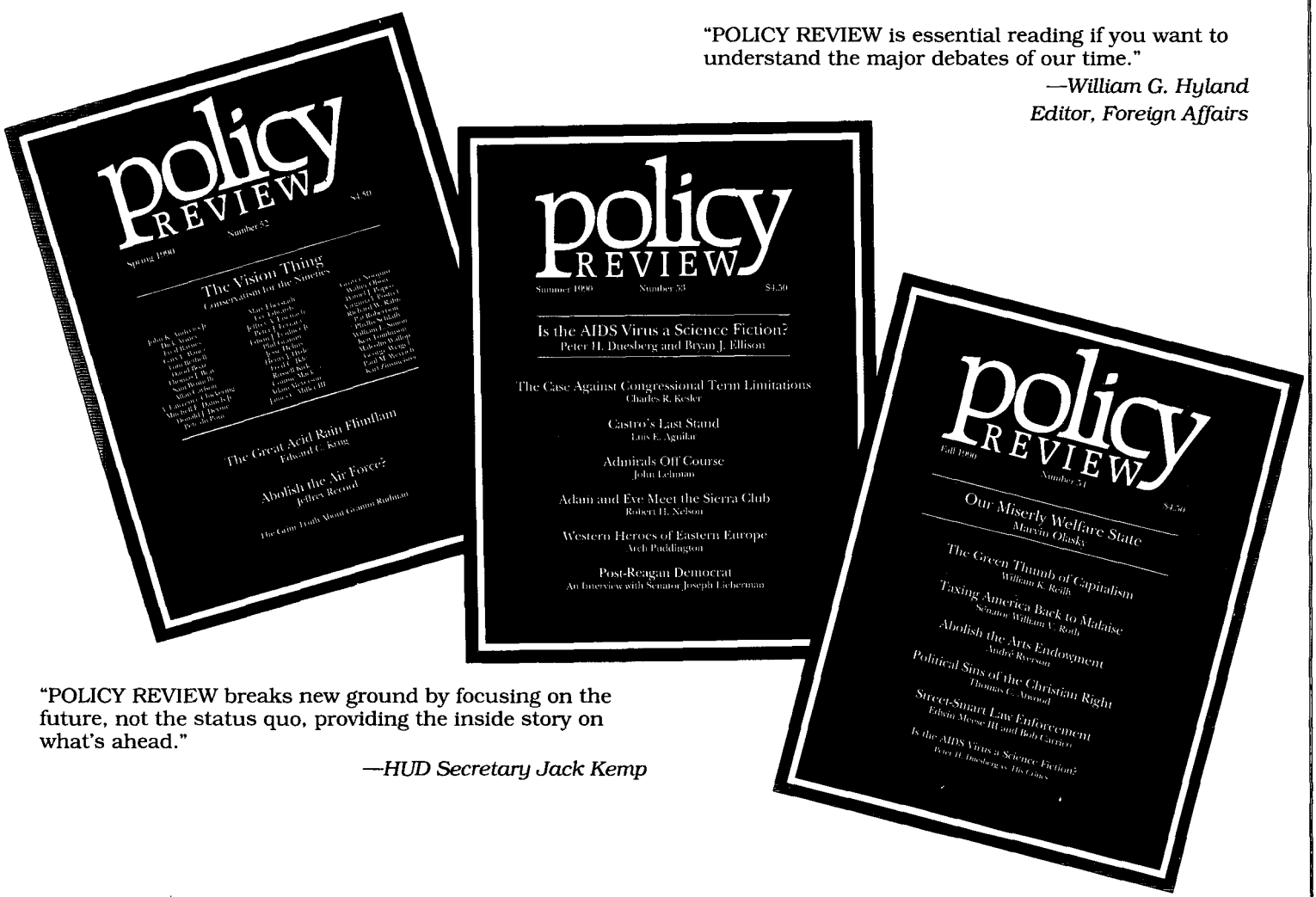

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Once a decision is made to build anti-missile defenses, the opposition from the *New York Times* editorial page, the MIT physics department, the Arms Control Association, and key members of the Democratic Party can easily be overcome. All the president would have to do is to ask the American people whether they would rather be in the position of the Israelis before or after they had Patriots.

Angelo Codevilla
A Question of Patriot-ism:
Why Isn't America Building Missile Defenses Today?

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